

# SOCIAL CONTROL OF THE FEEBLEMINDED

A STUDY OF SOCIAL PROGRAMS AND ATTITUDES  
IN RELATION TO THE PROBLEMS OF  
MENTAL DEFICIENCY

BY

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## PREFACE

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In this volume the endeavor has been made to present as fair a picture as possible of the concepts which have been held from time to time regarding mental deficiency, and to outline the various stages of the development of social control of this problem. The more recent trends of thought and measures of control have been particularly dealt with as a means of indicating what a modern program in mental deficiency might comprise.

Much of the material, to which reference has been made herein, has been published in a large number of scattered pamphlets and periodical articles. The aim has been to interpret these and other data in such a way as to show the continuity in the development of thought on this subject. Many of the articles referred to were originally published in the quarterly journal, *Mental Hygiene*, of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, to which publication I would acknowledge my indebtedness.

Among those who have generously assisted in the gathering of material and the reading of manuscript, in whole or in part, I would especially mention Dr. Walter E. Fernald, Superintendent of the Massachusetts School for the Feeble-minded at Waverley, Mass.; Dr. Charles Bernstein, Superintendent, and Miss Inez F. Stebbins, Social Investigator, of the Rome State School for Mental Defectives at Rome, N. Y.; Professor Samuel McCune Lindsay of Columbia University; Dr. Howard W. Potter, Clinical Director of Letchworth Village for the feeble-minded at Thiells, N. Y.; Dr. Sanger Brown, 2d, Chairman, Dr. Earl W. Fuller, Psychiatrist, and Miss Katherine Ecob, Director of Field Work, of the New York State Commission for Mental Defectives; Dr. Frankwood E. Williams, Medical Director and Dr. Thomas H. Haines, Director of the Division on Mental Deficiency, of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene.

A particular word should be said for the unfailing courtesy and helpfulness of the corps of librarians of the Russell Sage Foundation Library, without whose able assistance the work would have been rendered very much more difficult.

Above all, I am under peculiar obligation for guidance and inspiration to Professor Franklin H. Giddings, master and friend

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# CONTENTS

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	PAGE
CHAPTER I	
The Problem.. . . . .	17
CHAPTER II	
Early Treatment and the Period of Physiological Education.	25
CHAPTER III	
Revelations of the New Century. Heredity and Prevalence of Feeble-mindedness.....	37
CHAPTER IV	
The Social Indictment of the Feeble-minded... ..	46
CHAPTER V	
The Alarmist Stage.....	58
CHAPTER VI	
Newer Aspects of Heredity and Behavior.....	71
CHAPTER VII	
Social Reconstruction at Waverley . . . . .	85
CHAPTER VIII	
The Colony Plan; Rome Colonies for Boys.. . . .	108
CHAPTER IX	
Rome Colonies for Girls . . . . .	134

	PAGE
CHAPTER X	
The Public School and the Backward Child... ..	171
CHAPTER XI	
The Socializing Process . . . . .	186
CHAPTER XII	
The Feebleminded in the Social Order . . . . .	198

## LIST OF TABLES

---

	PAGE
TABLE 1.—Occupations and Earnings of Former Male Patients at Waverley. . . . .	101
TABLE 2 —Boys' Colonies Established at Rome State School.... .	114
TABLE 3.—Value of Products and Operating Costs of Rented Farm Colonies .. . . .	115
TABLE 4 —Operating Costs and Earnings of Kossuth Colony .... .	131
TABLE 5 —Mental Ages of Kossuth Colony Members ..... .	131
TABLE 6 —Status of 200 Girls Sent to Colonies, after Three-Year Period	139
TABLE 7 —Rome Colonies for Girls Established Prior to July 1, 1922	140
TABLE 8.—Financial Statement of Girls' Colonies, 1918-19 .... .	140
TABLE 9 —Financial Statement of Girls' Colonies, 1921-22 .. . .	141
TABLE 10.—Mental Ages of Colony Girls ..... .	142
TABLE 11.—Chronological Ages, Mental Ages, and Monthly Earnings of Girls in Clayville Colony—(May, 1922).. . . .	156
TABLE 12 —Status, as of July 1, 1920, of New Girls Sent to Colonies during the Preceding Year .. . . .	159
TABLE 13 —Status, as of July 1, 1921, of New Girls Sent to Colonies during the Preceding Year.... .	160
TABLE 14 —Returns for Discipline Among New Girls Sent to Colonies 1920-21.. . . .	162
TABLE 15 —Number of Girls Received in Colonies to July 1, 1921 . . .	165
TABLE 16 —Status, as of July 1, 1920, of Colony Girls Remaining under Supervision on that Date ..... .	165
TABLE 17 —Status, as of July 1, 1921, of Colony Girls Remaining under Supervision on July 1, 1920 ..... .	165
TABLE 18.—Reasons for Return to Institution of 86 Former Colony Girls.	166
TABLE 19 —Status, as of July 1, 1921, of Girls Discharged Through Colonies, Prior to July 1, 1920..... .	167

	PAGE
TABLE 20.—Reasons for Return of Girls from Discharge . . . . .	168
TABLE 21.—Children Born to Discharged Girls . . . . .	168
TABLE 22.—Classification of Cases Under Supervision of Field Agents	181
TABLE 23.—Nativity of 201 Ex-Students of Special Classes .. .	182
TABLE 24 —Location of Special Class Graduates .. . . .	182
TABLE 25 —Wages of 69 Former Special Class Students .. . . .	183





## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM

The assertion of Aristotle, reaffirmed so strongly by our modern sociologists and psychologists, that man is a political animal, using "political" in the broader meaning, of social, is subject to the obvious qualification that some of the species *homo sapiens* are more completely social than others. In fact the qualification would have to take into account individuals whose behavior seems for the most part anti-social, non-social or incompletely social. Going further one might be led to the conclusion, on the face of many facts being revealed today, that the ills of society can in a general way be attributed to the failure of many members of this species to act as the completely social animal might be expected to act. If any goal of social progress has ever been agreed upon, it has been centered about that ideal type of completely socialized personality, who should recognize that his own best interests and those of society are one, and act accordingly. Does this then give us a norm by which to measure the units which make up society? May we assume that the normal man is the social man, that he is most nearly normal who is most completely social in his behavior; that contrariwise, he who is least social has deviated in farthest degree from the normal?

It is significant that this assumption is supported by the work that has been done in the fields of abnormal psychology and psychiatry. Psychiatrists, who specialize in the treatment of mental disorders, have come to regard social behavior as the ultimate test of mental competency. Whether an individual shall be judged a patient needing treatment for a mental difficulty rests ultimately in the opinion of these medical specialists, not on any theoretical diagnosis resulting from the analytical probing of the individual's mental processes, but rather on the ability of the individual to get along in the world. If the person in question can support himself and those dependent upon him, can meet the ordinary demands of society, can rub elbows with his fellow-men without undue friction,

in short if he can make a "go of it", he is given a clean bill of health so far as psychiatry is concerned.

The proposition also reverses itself. If the social machine does not work as it should, if it breaks down at various points and a train of ills results; to change the figure, if there are persons who will not play the social game, who prevent good team-work and generally throw things out of joint, in brief, if there are individuals who show themselves by their acts to be non-social and anti-social, then we may begin to suspect (in the absence of other apparent factors) that such individuals are not entirely normal in their make-up and should be dealt with scientifically in the light of the mental factors involved.

Such an approach to all our social problems seems to be fundamental. In piece-meal fashion that approach is already being made to an understanding of the more pronounced types of social offenders, criminals and delinquents in jails, reformatories and courts; significant work in the same direction is also being carried on with other types of social failures by the institutions and agencies for mental disease and mental defect.

These socially maladjusted individuals fall roughly into two principal classes: those of normal intelligence with personality difficulties on the nervous or emotional side, and those of subnormal intelligence, generally known as the feeble-minded or mentally defective. It is with this latter class that this thesis will deal.

The purpose of this thesis is to discuss the various endeavors which have been made from time to time to meet the social problem of the feeble-minded. Particular emphasis will be placed upon the modern program of adjusting the feeble-minded to society by means of social control or social self-control.

Four main stages of development are noted:

1. The ancient and medieval period, down to the beginning of the Nineteenth Century (comprising the early part of Chapter II).
2. The period of physiological education, beginning with the first attempt at the scientific treatment of feeble-mindedness early in the Nineteenth Century and ending with the establishment of the first institutions for the feeble-minded in this country in the latter half of the same century (comprising remainder of Chapter II).
3. The alarmist period, roughly dating from 1900 to 1915, when the emphasis upon eugenics and heredity studies, and the appli-



cation of methods of intelligence testing, awakened public attention to feeble-mindedness as a social problem of the first magnitude (comprising Chapters III, IV, and V).

4. The modern period, in which the development of an adequate program for dealing with the large numbers of mental defectives in the population has necessitated the adoption of extra-institutional methods of care, training and supervision (comprising remainder of volume).

The accurate definition of mental deficiency has always presented a difficult problem and naturally so because so many subtle elements of human personality are involved in the concept which the term covers. That is to say, the difficulty of definition arises not with regard to the very obvious cases of low intelligence of the idiot and imbecile grade but rather with respect to the higher-grade cases of the moron group, in drawing a dividing line between those who may be regarded as normal and those who may be regarded as sub-normal or mentally defective. It is a matter of fact that no satisfactory definition of mental deficiency or feeble-mindedness<sup>1</sup> has yet been devised and those definitions which have been most widely used have admittedly been incomplete or unsatisfactory.

The definitions or attempts at definition which have been most current may be divided into two types, the social and the psychological. The standard definition in terms of social criteria is that of the Royal College of Physicians of London who define the feeble-minded person as "one who is capable of earning a living under favorable circumstances, but is incapable, from mental defect existing from birth, or from an early age, (a) of competing on equal terms with his normal fellows; or (b) of managing himself and his affairs with ordinary prudence."

This definition was adopted by the British Royal Commission appointed to consider methods of dealing with the feeble-minded, and in various modified forms has been the one most frequently used in this country. It has the advantage of being in conformity with the judgment and experience of those who have worked most closely with this problem, in putting the emphasis upon social efficiency as the ultimate test of mental competency. When it is pointed out that it has the disadvantage of being general and somewhat vague and thus not sharply distinguishing between subnormality and normality,

<sup>1</sup> Note: the terms mental deficiency and feeble-mindedness are used interchangeably throughout this volume.

the question may be raised whether in dealing with the complexities of human personality, there is any definite criterion or group of criteria that could be agreed upon as nicely drawing a sharp line between the feeble-minded and their mental superiors.

It is true that the psychological definition in terms of the intelligence quotient or mental age as determined by an intelligence test has the advantage of permitting the establishment of an exact quantitative point in the scale of intelligence as a dividing line. It is significant, however, of the limitations of this method, that the psychologists among themselves have never been able to agree as to just where in the scale this point should be fixed. As Dr. Porteus, himself a psychologist, has said: "The attempt to fix definite age limits of normality was certainly justified. But the proposed twelve-year Binet age level was a sieve with a mesh so small that, although the sorting out of the defectives proved to be a beautifully simple matter, it unfortunately segregated also great numbers of normal individuals. Unhappily for other theories, a nine- or ten-year Binet age is a measure so wide that it allows too many defectives to slip through. That the attempt to evolve a psychological definition without reference to a social criterion has failed is almost a tragedy."

It must also be borne in mind that the word "mental" as used in the phrase, mental deficiency, covers a broader range of personal qualities, or lack of them, than is included in the general intelligence which the psychological test measures. As another psychologist, Prof. Horace B. English, has stated: "The expression 'mental age' is seductively simple; it seems so unambiguous. Mental age 10 seems to imply intellectual powers, judgment and behavior like a ten-year-old. Now this is not what the tests prove and not what any competent psychologist from Binet onward has meant by the term. Mental age is merely a conventional expression, indicating a certain rather arbitrary attainment in the tests. Such a rating may indeed be taken as determining the level of general intelligence of the person examined, but general intelligence is not the same thing as judgment or wisdom, though these interpenetrate; nor is general intelligence the sole factor determining behavior, though perhaps the chief."<sup>2</sup>

1. Porteus, S. D. *A Study of Personality of Defectives with a Social Ratings Scale.* 1920. No. 23. *Publications of the Training School at Vineland, N. J.* p. 1.

2. English, H. B. *Is America Feeble-minded?* *The Survey*, October 15, 1922. p. 79.

It would be far out of the province of the present writer, being neither psychologist nor psychiatrist, to attempt any other definition of mental deficiency than those now current. It would seem however that the nearest approach to a satisfactory definition would combine both the psychological and social elements and indicate an intelligence quotient below a certain level, plus a certain deficiency in other personality traits leading to social inefficiency, as determining factors in constituting mental defect.

How large a problem mental deficiency is depends entirely upon this definition of terms. So far as social fitness is a criterion, mental deficiency is a relative term. Referring to a certain fellow-countryman whose home was in a rural province, a noted French physician exclaimed: "He is feeble-minded in Paris and normal at home." In New York State, commitments to the institutions for the feeble-minded from the cities of the State so far exceed those from rural districts as to be out of all proportion to the ratio of urban and rural population. Thus as the demands of life upon the individual vary in complexity with time and place so does the number of social effectives vary.

If the psychological definition alone could be accepted it would of course make the determination of the amount of existing mental defect comparatively easy. In defining the three grades of mental defect, idiot, imbecile, and moron, in terms of mental age, Dr. Goddard placed the upper limit of the moron group at twelve years, and this has since been frequently accepted to mean those with a mental age of under thirteen years. Dr. Leta S. Hollingworth states, speaking in favor of the psychological definition of mental defect: "We are now tending toward this definition: a feeble-minded person is one who has originally an intelligence quotient of 70 per cent or less, and whose status falls in the lowest two per cent of human intellect."<sup>1</sup> This reflects the conclusion reached in the earlier work of Dr. Lewis M. Terman, namely, "All who test below 70 I. Q. by the Stanford Revision of the Binet-Simon scale should be considered feeble-minded, and it is an open question whether it would not be justifiable to consider 75 I. Q. as the lower limit of 'normal' intelligence."<sup>2</sup> For any person sixteen or more years of age, an I. Q. of 70 means a mental age of slightly over 11 years. An I. Q. of 75 means a mental age of 12 years.

1 Hollingworth, L. S. *The Psychology of Subnormal Children* 1920 p. 51.

2 Terman, L. M. *The Measurement of Intelligence* 1916 p. 81

So far as any fixed point in the intelligence rating scale has been accepted as indicative of feeble-mindedness, an I. Q. of 70 is the point most commonly agreed upon. This point has been used in practice, for example, in the selection of children for special classes in the public schools.

When the above psychological criteria are applied to a large group of persons more or less representative of the population of the country as a whole, it is interesting to see where the result leads us. In the outcome of the psychological examinations of the men drafted into the army we have an application of the tests on a wide scale to a large and representative group. The results of these tests when tabulated in terms of mental age show that, if in the moron group are included those with a mental age of less than thirteen years, then 47.3 per cent of the white drafted men and 89 per cent of the colored drafted men were feeble-minded.<sup>1</sup> If 75 I. Q. (which is in the adult a mental age of 12) is taken as the lower limit of normality, then 30.3 per cent of the white drafted men and 79 per cent of the colored drafted men were feeble-minded, because this proportion was shown to have a mental age of less than twelve years. If 70 I. Q. is taken as the dividing line, or in the adult a mental age of slightly over 11 years, then 17.6 per cent of the drafted white men and 64 per cent of the colored drafted men were feeble-minded, inasmuch as that proportion registered below 11 years mental age in the tests.<sup>1</sup>

These results have recently been the occasion for many misgivings concerning the future of the American people. These misgivings are reserved for discussion in the final chapter of this volume. It is open to some question as to how far the results of the army tests may be taken as typical of the population of the country as a whole. As is pointed out in the official account of the tests the draft was "highly selected at the upper end by reason of the fact that men of higher intelligence became officers without being drafted or constituted the greater part of the group of professional and business experts that were exempted from draft because essential to industrial activity in the war."<sup>2</sup> On the other hand it is pointed out that there was some selection, though not as great numerically, at the lower end of the scale by reason of the fact that

1 Yerkes, R. M. *Psychological Examining in the U. S. Army*. 1921. *Memoirs National Academy of Sciences*. Vol. XV. Table 333. p. 790.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 785.

many of the grosser cases of mental deficiency were rejected without being sent to camp. This selection at the lower end presumably does not completely counterbalance that at the upper end. "It seems quite impossible" it is stated, "that it (selection) could have reduced the intelligence level of the draft so much as three years. Undoubtedly the intelligence of the draft is somewhat lower than that of the country at large, although it is quite unlikely that the difference should be so great."<sup>1</sup>

Suppose, in accordance with the above, we should add two years to the scale of intelligence ratings of the drafted men to indicate the intelligence of the general population. The percentage of the general adult population having an I. Q. of 70 or less, or a mental age of under 11, would then be practically the same as the percentage of drafted men having a mental age of under nine according to the published table. For the drafted white men this was 5.3 per cent and for the colored 32 per cent. By this estimate, which would seem to be a conservative interpretation of the army tests, over 5 per cent of the general adult population, and certainly that percentage and more of minors, would be definitely feeble-minded, if we adopt 70 I. Q. as the criterion. Thus, according to this commonly used criterion, in New York State alone, there would be over 519,000 feeble-minded persons, or a number in excess of the population of an entire city the size of Buffalo. In the nation as a whole, by this same standard, there would be 5,285,000 feeble-minded, not far below the population of the metropolis itself. The writer does not believe that any such proportion of the population can fairly be called feeble-minded but merely indicates where we are led by the best available evidence and the only definitely fixed criterion of mental deficiency.

Suppose we were to ignore entirely the evidence of the army tests and accept the assumption of Dr. Leta Stetter Hollingworth that only about two per cent of the population falls below 70 I. Q. and is mentally deficient; even so there would be by this low standard over 200,000 mental defectives in New York State and over 2,000,000 in the country as a whole.

The writer would merely indicate by the citation of these figures the impracticability of attempting to segregate *all* the feeble-minded, as that term is now interpreted, in institutions. New York State has made more than average progress as compared with other

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 785

States in the segregation of the feeble-minded, and yet its institutions for this class are at present able to accommodate less than 6,000, a rather insignificant beginning as compared with 500,000 or even 200,000 mental defectives in the population of the State as a whole. It costs the State at the present time annually \$1,800,000 merely for the maintenance of the 6,000 now in institutions without taking into account the interest on the investment in physical plant and the cost of repairs and new construction. Would the taxpayers of the State be willing to support in institutions even ten times that number or 60,000 at an annual cost of \$18,000,000 for maintenance plus an additional outlay of at least \$54,000,000 for the construction of buildings to house that number? From personal experience in the difficulty of obtaining State appropriations for a comparatively small amount of much needed new institutional construction, it would appear very doubtful. Even if the taxpayers were willing to bear this great burden, however, the majority of mental defectives in the population according to the above calculations would still remain out in the community. To what extent then is it necessary or desirable to institutionalize the feeble-minded? To what extent can they find their places in society outside of institutions? It is to these questions that an answer will be sought in the following pages.

## CHAPTER II

### EARLY TREATMENT AND THE PERIOD OF PHYSIOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Feeble-mindedness, if we adopt the social test referred to in the preceding chapter, is a relative term. A highly developed, complex industrial civilization, demanding a great degree of application, specialization, and skill on the part of its working units and making many and various social demands upon the individual as a citizen, will reveal large numbers of those unable to keep up with the social procession and interfering with the march, because of what is diagnosed as defective intelligence. In an earlier age, when the majority of persons lived a simple rural life in a limited environment and performed tasks requiring no high degree of training, the standard of mental competency would naturally fall much lower, with the result that only the more marked degrees of mental deficiency would be recognized as such. In these relative terms it is then to be expected that feeble-mindedness constitutes a much larger and more conspicuous social problem today than ever before.

There is no room for doubt that the more extreme degrees of feeble-mindedness, idiocy and to a certain extent, imbecility, have been familiar enough conditions from early times. For the Spartans idiocy presented a social problem that was dealt with in the sternest eugenic fashion and obviously defective children are said to have been cast into the river or left to perish on the mountainside. The laws of Lycurgus countenanced the deliberate abandonment of idiots, a practice which was probably followed to a certain extent throughout Greece and, according to Cicero, among the Romans also.

Curiously enough the Greek roots from which the word idiot is derived are "iditas", a private person, or "idios", peculiar, that is, a person set apart or alone. Thus both the roots contain the concept of non-social or extra-social, the idea that these persons lived in a world by themselves and were more or less outside the pale of society. It was as such extra-social beings that the feeble-minded for many long centuries were commonly treated—shunned, ostra-

cised, derided, persecuted, neglected, creatures considered incapable of human feeling and therefore undeserving of human compassion.

The example and teachings of Christ as to the duty of mankind to the weak and helpless appear to have brought some alleviation to the lot of the idiot and from that time on there were sporadic instances of the recognition of social responsibility for the care of the feeble-minded. The Bishop of Myra (the Saint Nicholas of our Christmas time) in the fourth century is said to have shown particular compassion toward the mentally defective and to have urged tender care of all such unfortunates.

So far as we know the fate of the feeble-minded in the Middle Ages, they frequently earned favor and support as fools and jesters at the hands of some royal or noble master. Quite commonly in certain localities, they unwittingly received homage and reverence through the superstitious belief that they were "les infants du bon Dieu," sacred beings having some mysterious connection with the unknown. Barr, writing in 1904, stated with regard to the latter treatment: "Proof of this commonly accepted belief that these creatures walked on earth but held their conversation in heaven is shown in the fact that Tycho Brahe had for his close companion a fool to whose mutterings the great astronomer listened as to a revelation. Among the Turks of today, and in many parts of Ireland and of Brittany, this same extravagant idea regarding these 'innocents' prevails. In Brazil an imbecile in a family is considered more a joy than a sorrow; rich and poor alike roam the streets undisturbed, soliciting alms which are never refused; in this way among the poor an idiot may be the sole support of a family. The American Indian also allows these 'children of the Great Spirit' to go unharmed.'" Here reverence, and there persecution, and all rooted in superstition! For the old abuse did not die out. The mental defective regarded as a sacred being at one time and in one place, at another time and place was regarded as possessed by the evil spirit and subjected to all sorts of cruel indignities in the hope of exorcising the demon. As late as the days of the Reformation, Luther and Calvin regarded these mental incompetents as "filled with Satan."

It was not until the beginning of the Nineteenth Century that the first educational and medical approach to this problem of a definitely

<sup>1</sup> Barr, M. W. *Mental Defectives Their History, Treatment and Training*. 1904. p. 25.



scientific character was made. A party of sportsmen hunting in the woods of Canne, Department of Aveyron, France, came upon a wild creature of the human species, a boy of 12 years, roaming through the woods like any animal, feeding upon acorns and nuts. Bonaterre, Professor of Natural History in the Central School of the Department of Aveyron, took this boy under his observation and described him as unused to our food, selecting his nourishment by smell; lying flat on the ground and immersing his chin in the water to drink, tearing his garments and trying constantly to escape; walking often on all fours; fighting with his teeth, giving few marks of intelligence; having no articulate language and even apparently devoid of the natural faculty of speech. Professor Bonaterre thought that "a phenomenon like this would furnish to philosophy and natural history important notions on the original constitution of man and on the development of his primitive faculties; provided that the state of imbecility we have noticed in this child does not offer an obstacle to his instruction."<sup>1</sup>

Education of this boy was finally undertaken by Itard, physician to the School for Deaf Mutes in Paris, in order, as he stated, "to solve the metaphysical problem of determining what might be the degree of intelligence and the nature of the ideas in a lad who, deprived from birth of all education, should have lived entirely separated from the individuals of his kind." Itard was unwilling to believe that the boy was an idiot but was of the opinion that he was simply wild or entirely untaught. On the other hand, Philip Pinel, Physician in Chief of the Bicetre, the hospital for the insane in Paris, warned that the boy was idiotic and therefore incapable of education.

Much interest centered about Itard's experiments with the boy. In fact it was thought that experimentation with him might help to shed light on a scientific controversy then being waged between two schools of thought, the sensationalists and the nativists. The former school conceived of the mind as a "tabula rasa" waiting to receive all its impressions from the outside by the pathway of sensation. The nativists assumed that the individual comes into the world with innate ideas which gradually unfold with the development of the mind.

<sup>1</sup> Seguin, Edward *Idiocy And Its Treatment by the Physiological Method* Teachers' College, Columbia University 1907. p. 16

In endeavoring to transform this boy whom he believed to be only an untutored savage into a civilized man, Itard adopted the following program:

- "1st To endear him to social life, by making it more congenial than the one he was now leading; and, above all, more like that he had but recently quitted
- "2d To awaken his nervous sensibility, by the most energetic stimulants, and at other times by quickening the affections of the soul.
- "3d. To extend the sphere of his ideas, by creating new wants, and multiplying his associations with surrounding beings.
- "4th To lead him to the use of speech, by determining the exercise of imitation, under the spur of necessity.
- "5th. To exercise, during a certain time, the simple operations of his mind upon his physical wants; and therefrom derive the application of the same to objects of instruction."<sup>1</sup>

This program was applied by Itard to his subject for more than a year when apparently the master began to suspect that there were elements of actual defect in his pupil and subsequently the program was varied to methods primarily physiological and more in accord with the needs of an idiot. This revised program included:

- "1. The development of the senses;
- "2. The development of the intellectual faculties;
- "3. The development of the affective functions."<sup>2</sup>

When finally Itard, after some five years of work with the boy, came to realize that the results he had anticipated could not be secured and that his subject was actually idiotic, he gave up in discouragement and relinquished the care of the boy, exclaiming: "Unfortunate! Since my pains are lost and my efforts fruitless, take yourself back to your forest and primitive tastes." The French Academy, however, summing up the opinion of that body on Itard's work reported: "If he (Itard) has not obtained a greater success it must be attributed not to any lack of zeal or talent but to the imperfection of the organs of the subject upon which he worked. The Academy moreover cannot see without astonishment how he could succeed as far as he did."<sup>2</sup> Thus ended the first

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p. 18

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 21.

attempt at the scientific education of an idiot. The literature in the mental deficiency field begins with the publication of Itard's work "De l'Education d'un l'Aveyron" published in 1801.

It was Edouard Seguin, Itard's pupil, who appreciated more fully than Itard himself the significant results of his work with the boy Seguin had noted the important though slight improvements which the boy had made in certain directions, such as sensory discrimination, recognition of objects, naming things, copying words, reading a little, etc., and he recognized these results to be the product of Itard's second program of physiological procedure. Seguin was both physician and psychologist. In addition to studying medicine and surgery under Itard he had also been a pupil of the famous psychiatrist, Esquirol. It was this same Esquirol who had formulated the first clear definition of idiocy as follows: "Idiocy," Esquirol wrote in 1828, "is not a disease but a condition in which the intellectual faculties are never manifested or have never been developed sufficiently to enable the idiot to acquire such amount of knowledge as persons of his own age and placed in similar circumstances with himself are capable of receiving. Idiocy commences with life or at that age which precedes the development of the intellectual and affective faculties, which are from the first what they are doomed to be during the whole period of their existence."<sup>1</sup>

Seguin agreed with Pinel that the savage boy of Aveyron was an idiot but disagreed with him in that he believed that idiocy was curable. "Can idiots be educated, treated, improved, cured?" Seguin asks, and answers: "To put the question was to solve it."<sup>2</sup>

It was in the physiological method which Itard had given up in despair that Seguin saw the secret of the successful treatment of idiocy. He founded in Paris in 1837 the first successful school to be established for the specific purpose of the education of idiots. Here his work was so productive that he was rewarded in 1842 with an appointment to the directorship of the enlarged school for idiots at the Bicetre. He left here at the end of the year, however, and re-established his private school. His great work, which stands as a classic landmark in the literature of mental deficiency, "The Moral Treatment, Hygiene, and Education of Idiots and Other Backward Children" published in 1846, was crowned by the French Academy and received favorable mention from Pope Pius IX.

Itard had held to the theories of his friend and master, DeCondillac, that "the faculties of our mind are but sensations transformed" and that "all simple ideas are the result of sensation alone." Seguin, on the contrary, followed Locke, in holding to the theory of an intermediate step between sensation and idea, that of an innate intelligent reflective power, which reasoning upon the notions resulting from sensation produces ideas.<sup>1</sup>

Seguin gives credit for the development of the physiological method to the work of the French instructors of deaf mutes and particularly Jacob Rodrigues Pe  re. The important principles of physiological education as thus developed Seguin states as follows

- "1. That the senses, and each one in particular, can be submitted to physiological training by which their primordial capability may be indefinitely intellectualized.
- "2. That one sense may be substituted for another as a means of comprehension and of intellectual culture.
- "3. That the physiological exercise of a sense corroborates the action, as well as verifies the acquisitions of another.
- "4. That our most abstract ideas are comparisons and generalizations by the mind of what we have perceived through our senses.
- "5. That educating the modes of perception is to prepare pabulum for the mind proper.
- "6. That sensations are intellectual functions performed through external apparatus as much as reasoning, imagination, etc., through more internal organs."<sup>2</sup>

Further describing the physiological method, Seguin says: "Our method to be really physiological must adapt itself in principles as well as in its means and instruments to the healthy development and usage of the functions. \* \* \* \* Man, being a unit, is artificially analyzed for study's sake into his three prominent vital expressions, activity, intelligence, and will. We consider the idiot as a man inferior in the expression of his trinity, and we understand the method of training idiots or mankind as a physiological agency by which the unity of manhood can be reached. \* \* \* \*<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Barr p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Seguin. p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58

"Activity, besides its unconscious and organic functions, divides into contractility and sensibility, with their specific tendencies; intelligence branches into many sub-functions, and will into its protean expressions, from love to hatred.

"The predominance of any of these functions constitutes a disease, their perversion leads to insanity; their notable deficiency at birth constitutes idiocy, afterwards imbecility, later yet dementia.

"Physiological education, including hygienic and moral training, restores the harmony of these functions in the young, as far as practicable, separating them abstractedly, to restore them practically in their unity.

"This is the psycho-physiological principle of the method."<sup>1</sup>

According to Seguin's system, one of the first things to be done in the training of the idiot is to correct the automatic motions and supply the deficiencies of the muscular apparatus. "Otherwise," he asks, "how could we expect to ripen a crop of intellectual faculties on a field obstructed by disordered functions?"<sup>2</sup> Thus, subject to the particular needs and deficiencies of the individual, the training begins with the overcoming of muscular incapacities, the development of movements such as locomotions and special motions, prehension, manipulation, palpitation, etc. Such gymnastic work is not intended to develop the muscular above all else but rather "to create an equilibrium of the functions \* \* \* by paying more attention to the nerves as being the most shattered in idiocy."<sup>3</sup> From these muscular beginnings the plan of education outlined by Seguin follows an elaborate system intended to develop in sequence the imitative, nervous, and reflective functions.

Summing up his physiological method Seguin says: "Children \* \* \* never perceive single, but compound phenomena; from sensational these become instantly idealized by comparison. Mere impressions, being compared, become ideas susceptible of combination, and of themselves producing any number of new ideas; of becoming indeed the mother of actions: for man cannot execute anything that has not been previously born into his mind. Sensation perceived like a notion, notion fecundated to an idea realized in life itself, such is the unbroken spiral of our teaching, and through teaching, of our action on idiocy. From collecting the sparse

1 *Ibid.*, 59.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 66.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 69

powers of muscles and nerves disconnected by the absence of will, to the gathering of the faculties in the act of thinking, our progress has been a constant ascension on the steps leading from isolation to sociability."<sup>1</sup>

The methods advocated and used by Dr. Seguin for educating the senses and training the muscles to directed, accurate response, form the basis of those employed up to the present time by the various institutions for the feeble-minded. "This physiological education of defective brains, as a result of systematic training of the special senses, the functions and the muscular system, was looked upon as a visionary theory, but has been verified and confirmed by modern experiments and researches in physiological psychology."<sup>2</sup> For example, at the Massachusetts School for the Feeble-minded at Waverley, Massachusetts, the methods devised by Seguin and carefully worked out and applied by later experts are used in the training of the children there. Object teaching, instructive games, manual training, educational gymnastics, in fact, many of the methods employed in kindergartens in the training of normal children, are used to awaken the inactive special senses of the feeble-minded children and to train their muscles.

One of the methods of developing the sense of touch, for example, is by blindfolding the child and placing his hand on objects and substances of contrasting qualities. At first, he is expected to notice only the different sensations produced by the contrasts; gradually he is asked to select various objects by the sense of touch alone, later to name them, etc. In the same general way, the senses of hearing, sight, smell and taste are developed. Then comes the discipline of the muscles which is accomplished better by means of the simple movements of play and the occupations of childhood than by the use of formal gymnastics. These examples are mere suggestions of the careful methods employed to enable the child to acquire knowledge from sensations, to learn "to see what he looks at, to hear, to understand, to obey and to do."

Great importance attaches to the work of Seguin because the methods he developed and the results he obtained furnished the principles of and impetus to organized efforts in behalf of the

1 *Ibid*, p. 146

2 Fernald, W. E. *History of the Treatment of the Feeble-minded* Reprinted from the Report of the Proceedings of the Twentieth National Conference of Charities and Correction, held at Chicago, June, 1893 Fourth Edition, 1912, p. 2

feeble-minded in practically all of the European countries and in America. The published results of his work, together with that of Dr. Guggenbuhl, who conducted a successful school for cretins in Switzerland, and Dr. Saegert of the Asylum for Deaf Mutes in Berlin, were not long in prompting similar endeavors in America. Here many States had already organized progressive institutions for the care, treatment, and training of the blind, deaf mutes, and the insane. The feeble-minded, however, had been totally neglected and those whose families were unable to provide for them and who were incapable of self-support and self-direction had only the almshouse and the jail, with all the abuses that centered about these places in that day, left to them as a refuge.

Several attempts to educate mentally defective children in the institutions for the blind and deaf had met with more or less success. The most notable of these experiments was that undertaken in 1839 by Dr. Samuel G. Howe, Director of the Perkins Institute for the Blind in Boston. The first step in the direction of adequate State provision for the feeble-minded was taken in New York State in 1846 when on the 25th of March, Dr. F. P. Backus introduced in the Legislature a bill providing for the establishment of a State asylum for idiots. This bill, however, was defeated. In Massachusetts, legislative action directing an inquiry "into the condition of idiots in the Commonwealth" was taken in the same year. As a result, Massachusetts on October 1, 1848, opened in South Boston an experimental school for the teaching of idiots. This was the first State institution for the feeble-minded to be established in this country. Three months preceding this, in July, 1848, Dr. H. B. Wilbur had opened in Barre, Massachusetts, the first private school in the country for the education of idiots.

In New York State the legislation proposed in 1846 was finally enacted in 1851 and in October of that year a State school of idiots was opened at Albany. In 1853 this school was transferred to Syracuse where the first building in this country for the education of idiots was erected. This school remains today on its original site as a part of the New York system for the care and training of the feeble-minded and is now known as the Syracuse State School for Mental Defectives.

Pennsylvania was the next to follow the lead of Massachusetts and New York in the establishment of a training school for the

feeble-minded. Ohio followed, then Connecticut, and so on until now 44 States have made some institutional provision for the reception of this class of dependents.

This early work for the feeble-minded, particularly in Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania, was materially aided by the personal presence of the master, Edouard Seguin. In 1848, Seguin accepted an invitation from Dr. Samuel G. Howe, then the Superintendent of the Massachusetts School for the Feeble-minded, to come to America and assist him for a brief time in his work. This invitation Seguin accepted and he spent the remainder of his life in this country. He assisted Dr. Howe for a short time in the administration of the Massachusetts school. Later he rendered invaluable service in helping Dr. Hervey B. Wilbur to organize the new school for the feeble-minded at Syracuse. He was subsequently associated in the administration of the Pennsylvania School for Idiotic and Feeble-minded Children in Philadelphia. Early in 1880 he opened a private school for mental defectives in New York City but died several months later.<sup>1</sup>

All these early schools for the feeble-minded were organized in the hope of curing idiocy by the application of the physiological method or at least of so greatly improving the condition of their patients that they could be returned to the community, capable of self-guidance and of earning an independent livelihood. These schools were, therefore, frankly educational institutions. Dr. Howe in one of his early reports stated, "It is a link in the chain of common schools—the last indeed, but still a necessary link in order to embrace all the children in the State." After some years of effort along these lines the physicians in charge of these schools apparently reached the conclusion that not all cases of idiocy could be cured or even greatly improved. "This institution, being intended for a school, should not be converted into an asylum for incurables," wrote Dr. Howe in another place. The insistence was placed, therefore, upon receiving children of the higher-grade and improvable types.

Given then this more favorable material to begin with, what were the results actually accomplished by these early training schools for the feeble-minded? From our knowledge of this problem today we know that no case of actual mental deficiency was cured. In other words, the best efforts of the best trained physicians and



teachers were unable by the physiological or any other method to make up the lack which nature had placed in the child from birth or from an early age. Improvements in physical and muscular development, in habits, in behavior, in self-help, and in occupational ability were realized in many cases. The feeble-minded, while not curable as regards their defect, were teachable and they profited by the physiological method to the extent of their limited endowments. The improvement shown in these cases, however, was frankly not nearly so great as had been originally anticipated. A very small proportion of the feeble-minded could be returned to the community, even after years of training, on a self-supporting basis. This placed a new aspect upon the whole problem. It created an unforeseen difficulty. It had not been intended when these schools were organized that the State should assume indefinite custodial care of these cases. The State was simply to educate them by a special method during the regular school period. Now the institutions found themselves besieged on two sides. The parents and guardians of the children who had completed the regular course of training and theoretically should have been ready to return to the community, begged that these boys and girls (now young men and women) be retained in the institution because of their obvious inability to be anything but dependents demanding a great deal of care if they should be returned to their homes. On the other hand, there was an even greater demand from all sides for the admission of new cases of all ages and all types. It became more and more evident that the State must squarely face the large and less hopeful problem of providing indefinite custodial care for low-grade cases.<sup>1</sup>

So the idea of the institution for the feeble-minded as an educational project pure and simple had to be abandoned. More and more it was recognized that unless the feeble-minded were to be permitted to become vagrants and dependents and to drift into almshouses and jails the State would have to enlarge its institutional accommodations to make provision for hundreds of mental defectives then at large. In New York State the Syracuse institution has continued its policy of receiving feeble-minded children of school age capable of being benefited by instruction, though it long ago gave up the hope of curing mental deficiency.

In 1870 New York City organized its own hospital and school for the feeble-minded on Randall's Island, where it received both

<sup>1</sup> Fernald *History of the Treatment of the Feeble-Minded*.

low-grade and high-grade cases. In 1878 the State opened a separate branch of the Syracuse State institution at Newark, N. Y., to meet the serious problem of custodial care for feeble-minded women of child-bearing age. In 1885 the institution at Newark was separately incorporated. The further needs of custodial care for feeble-minded persons of all ages and both sexes, and especially for low-grade and delinquent cases, led to the establishment in 1894 of the Rome State Custodial Asylum at Rome, N. Y.

Thus the early period of the care and training of the feeble-minded in this country, roughly from 1850 to 1900, saw defeat of the sanguine hopes of the great teacher, Seguin, that idiocy was curable. On the other hand, it marked the development of the system of caring for this class of persons in institutions and brought recognition of social responsibility for dealing with the problem.

### CHAPTER III

#### REVELATIONS OF THE NEW CENTURY: HEREDITY AND PREVALENCE OF FEEBLEMINDEDNESS

Just as the beginning of the 19th century had witnessed the first scientific attempts to educate mental defectives and to arrive at an understanding of mental deficiency, so the dawn of the twentieth century marked the first public awakening to mental deficiency as a social problem of the first magnitude. Two factors were mainly responsible for this rather suddenly aroused and widespread concern about a problem which had theretofore existed without any general public notice. These factors were:

1. The development of the eugenics movement together with the rediscovery of the Mendelian laws of heredity and resulting heredity studies.
2. The development and application of the Binet-Simon method of intelligence testing.

The modern eugenics movement is generally regarded as dating from the publication in "Nature" in 1901 of Sir Francis Galton's paper "Possible Improvement of the Human Breed." In the year preceding the publication of this article, the botanists DeVries, Correns and Tschermak, by independent investigations, verified and brought to light the long-forgotten Mendelian principle of heredity. Stimulated by the fast growing interest in eugenics, it was not long until researches had begun to apply the Mendelian theory to the transmission of human characters and among them mental defect.

Heredity as an etiological factor in mental deficiency had been recognized in a general way among the early students of this problem but it was considered as one of many factors and not of predominating importance. Nor was the mode of transmission of the defect understood. Seguin, speaking of the etiological factors said: "The circumstances which favor the production of idiocy are endemic, hereditary, parental or accidental. \* \* \* It is considered hereditary where there have been cases of idiocy or of insanity in the preceding or collateral generations."<sup>1</sup> In his discussion, however, of the pre-

<sup>1</sup> Seguin, Edward *Idiocy And Its Treatment by the Physiological Method* p 30

vention of idiocy, Seguin lays the greatest stress on the parental and accidental causes, apparently believing that they were of greater importance than the hereditary factors.

The Massachusetts Commission in a report in 1848 on 574 cases of idiocy attributed 22 per cent of them to heredity. The Connecticut Commission in investigations as early as 1856, found 51 idiots in 17 families and also several large families that were defective throughout, establishing a strong presumption of heredity.

In the revived interest in this problem, springing up in connection with the eugenics movement, the careful study of family histories of defective stock was regarded as furnishing the concrete evidence that mental deficiency is strongly and preponderantly hereditary. The first of these thorough-going family studies was the record of "The Jukes" by Robert L. Dugdale, published in 1877 and reprinted in 1910. In writing the introduction to the reprinted work, Professor Giddings stated, "When the first edition of 'The Jukes' was published, it was the best example of scientific method applied to a sociological investigation." While written from the standpoint of penology in order to show the combined influence of heredity and environment acting on the individual in the production of crime, this study, nevertheless, revealed how heredity in a degenerate stock, especially when fostered in an isolated community, tends to repeat itself generation after generation in all kinds of anti-social behavior. The Dugdale study included the progeny of five notorious sisters of whom the most notorious was known as "Margaret, the mother of criminals." Of the 540 descendants of these sisters, together with 169 other persons connected by marriage or cohabitation, a total of 709 in all, 128 were known to be prostitutes, 67 were diseased and supported at public expense, 142 were given outdoor relief amounting to a gross total of 734 years, 64 were almshouse inmates, and 76 were officially listed as criminals charged with 115 offences and jail sentences aggregating 116 years. Although Dugdale reports only one case of outright idiocy, one of insanity and one of epilepsy in the Juke blood, it is apparent that we have here a typically defective stock in which by modern methods of examination, a large amount of mental defect would be found. This assumption has since been verified by a later study of the Jukes made by Arthur H. Estabrook of the Eugenics Record Office entitled "The Jukes in 1915." After a comprehensive study, Estabrook con-

cluded, "One-half of the Jukes were and are feeble-minded, mentally incapable of responding normally to the expectations of society," and further, "All of the Juke criminals were feeble-minded."

A study similar to that of the Jukes, and inspired by Dugdale's work, made by the Rev. O. C. McCullough in Indiana and published in 1888 under the title, "The Tribe of Ishmael," added further evidence in support of the role of heredity in perpetuating degenerate stocks.

The first large-scale systematic survey of the care and control of the feeble-minded was that undertaken by the British Royal Commission in 1904. The report of this Commission in 8 volumes was published in 1908. In its four years of investigation, the Commission examined 248 expert witnesses; it also appointed medical inspectors to make personal investigations of conditions in 16 separate typical districts, rural and urban. Twenty-five of the 35 expert witnesses called on the subject of heredity of mental defect, "attached supreme importance to the fact that in a very large proportion of cases of mental defect, there is a history of mental defect in the parents or near ancestors."<sup>1</sup>

The conclusions of Dr. A. F. Tredgold, well-known British authority on mental deficiency, as contained in the Commission's report, were as follows:

"In 90 per cent of patients suffering from mental defect, the condition is the result of a morbid state of the ancestors, which so impairs the vital powers of the embryo that full and perfect development cannot take place. In the milder cases the effects are seen in the nervous system only, since this is the most delicate and easily injured part of the organism; in the grosser cases other parts of the body are also affected, as seen in the various imperfections and abnormalities of structure called 'stigmata of degeneracy.' In the 10 per cent of cases of secondary amentia the condition is due to accidental, and, for the most part, unavoidable, causes. Amentia is thus not only hereditary, it is also the final expression of a progressive neuropathic degeneration."<sup>2</sup>

Commenting on the Commission's report, Dr. Tredgold further stated:<sup>3</sup> "With the exception of a very small proportion of cases which are due to accidental and unavoidable causes, we now know

<sup>1</sup> *An Abstract of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded* 1909. p. 24

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Article published in *The Contemporary Review*. June, 1910. pp. 713-719

that mental deficiency is the result not of chance, but of law; that, in short, it is the consequence of a morbid inheritance, the ancestors usually being insane, epileptic, or sufferers from some other marked mental abnormality. Another important point is the transmissibility of feeble-mindedness to a subsequent generation. This is a fact which is recognized by every experienced observer; indeed it is probable that in the whole realm of medicine, there is no disease which shows a greater tendency to be passed on to the offspring than does mental deficiency."

The most extensive data in support of the heredity of feeble-mindedness is that which has been presented by Dr. Henry H. Goddard who, from 1906 to 1919, was Director of the Research Laboratory at Vineland. In 1910 Dr. Goddard read a paper before the American Breeders' Association,<sup>1</sup> in which he presented charts of the family histories of a number of feeble-minded inmates of the Vineland institution showing the presence of mental defect, generation after generation. These charts were presented at the time by Dr. Goddard without comment or conclusion, but in themselves strongly suggested the transmission of defect in the typical Mendelian way. Referring to this study, Dr. Charles B. Davenport stated:<sup>2</sup> "There are laws of inheritance of general mental ability that can be sharply expressed. Low mentality is due to the *absence* of some factor, and if this factor that determines normal development is lacking in both parents, it will be lacking in all of their offspring. *Two mentally defective parents will produce only mentally defective offspring.* This is the first law of inheritance of mental ability. \* \* \* The second law of heredity of mentality is that, aside from 'Mongolians,' probably no imbecile is born except of parents who, if not mentally defective themselves, both carry mental defect in their germ plasm." Thus Davenport gives the first definite statement of the heredity of mental deficiency in terms of the Mendelian formula.

Probably the two best known works on this subject of the relation of mental deficiency and heredity, are Dr. Goddard's publications:

"The Kallikak Family."—1912.

"Feeble-mindedness, Its Causes and Consequences."—1914.

1. Goddard, H. H. *Heredity of Feeble-mindedness* Eugenics Record Office, Bulletin No. 1. Reprinted from *American Breeders' Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp. 165-178, 1910.

2. Davenport, Charles B. *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics*. 1911. pp. 66-67.

The former publication gave the history of five generations of the descendants of an illegal union between Martin Kallikak, Sr., and a presumably feeble-minded girl whom the former met at a tavern while serving in the Revolutionary army. The illegal son of this union, Martin Kallikak, Jr., left 480 descendants. An inquiry into available sources showed that of these 480 descendants, 143 were conclusively proved to be feeble-minded; only 46 were found normal, while the rest were unknown or doubtful. In terms of social behavior, there were among these 480 descendants, 36 illegitimate children, 33 sexually immoral, mostly prostitutes, 24 confirmed alcoholics, 3 criminals, and 8 who kept houses of ill-fame. These direct descendants married into other families for the most part of the same type. Inclusive of these, records of 1,146 individuals were obtained, of whom 262 were shown to be definitely feeble-minded.<sup>1</sup>

Later, Martin Kallikak, Sr., contracted a lawful marriage with a normal, respectable girl, and of this union there were traced 496 direct descendants, all normal persons. Three men only were found to be somewhat degenerate, but there was no defect. The descendants of this normal stock belong to the best families in their State and became eminent in professions, in the educational world and in political life.<sup>2</sup>

In his "Feeble-mindedness, Its Causes and Consequences," Dr. Goddard gives the results obtained from a study of 327 institutional cases at Vineland. There was no selection of cases, every child of every age and degree of defect whose home was within the State or nearby, being included in the investigation. In 27 of these cases there was insufficient data to permit of conclusions. Of the remaining 300, Dr. Goddard found that 164, or 54 per cent of the cases showed "other feeble-minded persons in such numbers or in such relation to the individual case studied as to leave no doubt of the hereditary character of the mental defect."<sup>3</sup> Goddard concludes: "In these cases it is evident from the charts themselves that we are dealing with a condition of mind or brain which is transmitted as regularly and surely as color of hair or eyes."<sup>4</sup> Besides the above, 34 cases or 11.3 per cent, were regarded as probably hereditary

<sup>1</sup> Goddard, H. H. *The Kallikak Family*, 1912 p. 18 and ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>3</sup> Goddard, H. H. *Feeble-mindedness, Its Causes and Consequences* 1916 p. 437.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 437.

which, if included, would make the hereditary group represent 65 per cent of the total. In still another 12 per cent, representing 37 cases, heredity was shown in the form of neuropathic ancestry with the forebears suffering from such maladies as paralysis, apoplexy, epilepsy, insanity, blindness, and various neurotic conditions. "Accidental" cases numbered 51 or 19 per cent, while in the remaining 8 cases, or 2.6 per cent, there was found no definite assignable cause.<sup>1</sup>

As to the application of the Mendelian law to the transmission of normal-mindedness and feeble-mindedness, (the latter being conceived as the absence of a determiner for normality) Goddard states, after studying the offspring of 324 matings: "Since our figures agree so closely with Mendelian expectation and since there are few, if any, cases where the Mendelian formula does not fit the facts, the hypothesis seems to stand: viz., normal-mindedness is, or at least behaves like a unit character; is dominant and is transmitted in accordance with the Mendelian law of inheritance."<sup>2</sup> Thus Goddard concludes: "It is clear from the data already presented that feeble-mindedness is hereditary in a large percentage of the cases, and that it is transmitted in accordance with the Mendelian formula."<sup>3</sup>

A number of other well-known studies of mental defect in families, similar to that of the Kallikaks and the Jukes, and producing the same general evidence as to the hereditary character of mental defect need not be considered in detail here. They include: "The Nam Family" by Arthur H. Estabrook, 1912; "The Hill Folk" by Davenport and Danielson, 1912; "The Pineys" by Elizabeth H. Kite, 1913; "The Jukes in 1915" by Arthur H. Estabrook, 1915; "The Family of Sam Sixty" by Mary S. Kostir, 1916.

Simultaneously with these discoveries of the perpetuation and multiplication of defective stock by biological principles, there was developing on the psychological side, the machinery of measuring intelligence and thus of determining more or less accurately, the degree of mental defect and the extent of mental deficiency in the general population. The results of the work of Dr. Alfred Binet and Dr. Th. Simon in France in devising these intelligence tests were published for the first time in 1905 in "*L'Annee Psychologique*," the French psychological journal. When visiting Europe in 1908,

1. *Ibid.*, p. 437.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 556

3. *Ibid.*, p. 560.



Dr. Henry H. Goddard learned of the tests and though skeptical as to their practicability, tried them shortly after his return upon the inmates at Vineland. Dr. Goddard was surprised to find that the grading of the inmates by the tests accorded closely with the classification of the pupils on the basis of institutional experience.

In 1909, the Binet-Simon measuring "scale" with the grading by years was published in *"L'Annee Psychologique"* and in January, 1910, the first abstract of the scale was published by the Vineland Laboratory. The further practical application of the tests by persons who had become skilled in their use, quickly proved their value and with later refinements and revisions the tests soon came to be regarded as an indispensable aid in the diagnosis of mental deficiency.

To the refinements of the intelligence test must be given the credit of having discovered an entirely new class of the feeble-minded, at the same time the most numerous and the most socially dangerous. This class consisted of those so-called "high-grade" feeble-minded persons, above the imbecile in intelligence and yet below normal. They were persons, for the most part, who would ordinarily pass for normal; persons of the type whom committing judges even today, in spite of the findings of the intelligence test and an undenied history of social incompetency, often refuse to recognize as feeble-minded. To designate this class of high-grade and borderline mental defectives, Dr. Goddard in a paper presented in 1910 before the American Association for the Study of the Feeble-minded, suggested the term "moron" from the Greek word meaning foolish. In this paper, Dr. Goddard proposed a classification of degrees of defectiveness according to mental age which has since been generally adopted. The term, idiot, accordingly designates those having a mental age of one and two years; the term, imbecile, those having a mental age of from three to seven years; the term, moron, those having a mental age from eight years to normal.

The Binet-Simon tests and other later revisions and adaptations of them, provided for the first time a means of estimating the extent and degree of mental deficiency in the country at large. Given the machinery for testing, there were, however, many difficulties of a practical nature in the way of obtaining anything like a complete census and classification of all the feeble-minded. Estimates were made, however, on the basis of various samplings as to the extent of mental deficiency in the general population. These indicated a ratio

of one feeble-minded person to every 250 of the population, thus placing the estimated number of feeble-minded in New York State outside of institutions at about 40,000.<sup>1</sup>

The great opportunity of the psychological test to prove its real utility and to operate on an extensive scale, came during the World War. The credit quite-universally given the tests for their war service in weeding out the mentally unfit, and in classifying the enlisted and commissioned personnel for various assignments, is recent enough to be well recalled. The war over, the published results of the tests afforded a basis of generalization such as had never before been offered as to the extent of mental deficiency and in fact the distribution of all degrees of intelligence among the population at large. The results of these tests and their significance are disclosed in chapters I and XII.

It should be noted here that rejections from the military service for mental deficiency could not be referred directly by the psychological officers to the commanding officers for action but such recommendations had to pass through the hands of the medical officers of the Neuro-Psychiatric Division. As a matter of fact, the late Dr. Pearce Bailey, chief of this latter Division, during the war, stated that, "Only a small number of mental defectives were referred to the neuro-psychiatric division by psychologists."<sup>2</sup> On the basis of the experience of the Division of Neuro-Psychiatry, therefore, as distinguished from that of the Division of Psychology,

<sup>1</sup> In 1917 the Committee on Mental Hygiene of the New York State Charities Aid Association made a study of various surveys made up to that date and applied the estimates given to the New York State population as follows:

PROPORTION OF FEEBLEMINDED TO GENERAL POPULATION AS SHOWN  
BY VARIOUS SURVEYS AND ESTIMATES

	Ratio	Applied to New York
1909 Royal Commission of Great Britain . . . . .	1—217	45,000
1915 Porter County (Indiana) Survey . . . . .	1—136	71,000
1916 New Castle County (Delaware) Survey . . . . .	1—262	37,000
1917 Nassau County (New York) Survey . . . . .	1—183	53,000
Average of above figures . . . . .		51,000
ESTIMATES OF AUTHORITIES		
H. H. Goddard . . . . .	1—250	39,000
E. R. Johnstone . . . . .	1—250	39,000
1915 W. E. Fernald . . . . .	1—250	39,000
1915 New York State Commission to Investigate Pro- vision for the Mentally Defective . . . . .	1—242	40,000
1916 Report of Charles H. Strong in Investigation of New York Charities . . . . .	1—294	33,000
Average of above estimates . . . . .		38,000

<sup>2</sup> Bailey, Pearce, and Haber, Roy. *Mental Deficiency Mental Hygiene*, Vol IV, No 3, July, 1920, p 569

"the total number of individuals seriously handicapped by mental defect (including rejections by local boards) brought to light by the mobilization reaches 26,545."<sup>1</sup> The cases thus identified by the neuropsychiatrists, it should be said, were of the very definite type of defect, in other words, "The mental defect was so pronounced that the bulk of these recruits were considered unfit for any kind of military service"<sup>1</sup> On the basis of the findings of mental defect by this Division of medical officers, Dr. Bailey estimates that "there would be 353,210 male defectives in the United States if mental deficiency ran uniform among persons of all ages; if uniform for the ages between 18 and 45, there would be 164,710 male defectives in this group."<sup>2</sup> On the basis of the more conservative of these figures, he estimated the number of mental defectives of both sexes in New York State outside of institutions at 40,000, thus according substantially with the earlier estimates above mentioned.

The discovery, as the result of these methods of intelligence testing, of the wide prevalence of mental deficiency was responsible for bringing the problem of feeble-mindedness out of its institutional seclusion into the glare of social notoriety. There was a rather rapid multiplication in the number of known mental defectives and these additions to the ranks of the feeble-minded were found not in the institutions for the most part but in the very midst of the community. Moreover, the more thoroughly the mental defective was searched for and found, the more completely was he apparently involved in all manner of offenses against the social order. The social indictment found in the case of the Feeble-minded vs. Society will be reviewed in the following chapter.

1 *Ibid*, p. 564

2. *Ibid.*, p. 566

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SOCIAL INDICTMENT OF THE FEEBLEMINDED

The findings of the hereditary character, the rapid multiplication, and the wide prevalence of mental deficiency, were of moment only in the light of the social shortcomings of the feeble-minded. Prior to the opening of the twentieth century when the feeble-minded were thought of in terms of the lower-grade cases, idiots and imbeciles, the question of the anti-social conduct of the mentally defective had scarcely received attention. The irresponsibility of certain types of the feeble-minded was apparent, to be sure, but the ready recognition of the lower grades of defect and the comparatively small number of such low-grade cases facilitated the necessary custodial care and supervision. It will be recalled, for example, that by the standards of his day, Dugdale noted only one case of mental deficiency, an idiot, among all the Jukes of his study. By the standards of 1915, as has been mentioned, Dr. Estabrook found that "one-half of the Jukes were and are feeble-minded." Thus what was regarded in 1877 as primarily a problem of criminal degeneracy, became in 1915 primarily a problem of mental deficiency.

The Report of the British Royal Commission in 1908 was the first comprehensive study to reveal the close connection between mental deficiency and social inadequacy. It is significant that the definition of feeble-mindedness adopted by the Commission, which has since been recognized quite generally as standard, made social competency the test of normality. According to this definition, the feeble-minded are "persons who are capable of earning a living under favorable circumstances, but are incapable from mental defect existing from birth or from an early age (a) of competing on equal terms with their normal fellows; or (b) of managing themselves and their affairs with ordinary prudence."<sup>1</sup>

The great amount of evidence which the Commission gathered was of a disturbing nature. This evidence revealed in striking manner the relation existing between feeble-mindedness and various social ills.

1. Definition suggested by the Royal College of Physicians of London. *Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded*, 1908, Vol. VIII, p. 4

In dealing with the question of mental defect and crime, "the evidence points unmistakably to the fact that mentally defective children often have immoral tendencies; that they are greatly lacking in self-control; and moreover are peculiarly open to suggestion so that they are at the mercy of bad companions."<sup>1</sup> Thus they drift into ways of crime at an early age. The medical officer of Pentonville Prison reported 40 per cent of the juvenile offenders received in his institution as feeble-minded.<sup>2</sup> The medical officer to the London County Council stated that if he could have fingerprints made of every child in the special classes, probably during the succeeding ten years a great number of them would be found under assumed names in maternity hospitals or in the hands of the police. He stated that he had frequently recognized in police reports in the newspapers, feeble-minded children known to him.<sup>3</sup>

The testimony of prison medical officers generally estimated 20 per cent of the prison population to be feeble-minded. It was especially noted that great numbers of the habitual criminals were feeble-minded; in one case there had been 105 previous convictions.<sup>4</sup> The statement is made that "at the House of Detention, a large proportion of the prisoners are feeble-minded or lunatic."<sup>5</sup> And a little farther on—"Of 111 weak-minded convicts in Parkhurst prison at the close of the year, March 31, 1904, 58 were adjudged affected with congenital deficiency."<sup>6</sup> The nomadic habits of these persons undoubtedly brought the number of habitual criminals considerably lower than it otherwise would be. Besides the more serious offences of murder, rape, arson, etc., there was found on every hand to be a great amount of begging, vagrancy, sleeping-out, petty thieving, etc. Ten per cent of the tramps admitted to reformatories were shown to be feeble-minded. "At the Holloway Prison, out of 803 women there on Nov. 29, 1904, 83 were of that type (mentally defective), 41 chronic inebriates, 39 feeble-minded and 3 insane; and of 1,297 convicted persons received during that month, 56 were feeble-minded."<sup>7</sup>

On the general question of feeble-minded criminals, the Commissioners have this to say: "Many competent observers are of the opinion that if the constantly recurring fatuous and irresponsible

1 Abstract of Royal Commission Report, p. 6      2. Report, Vol. VIII, p. 123.

3. Abstract, p. 7.

4 Vol VIII, p. 124.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 122.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 125

7 *Ibid.*, Part II. *The Problem of the Metropolis*, p. 460.

crimes and offences of mentally defective persons are to be prevented, long and continuous detention is necessary. The experience of the prison authorities fully confirms this opinion. From the earliest age, when they appear before the magistrates as children on remand or as juvenile offenders, until and throughout the adult period of their lives, the mentally defective at first reprimanded and returned to their parents, then convicted and subjected to a short sentence and returned to their parents and then later continually sentenced and re-sentenced and returned to their parents or friends till for crimes of greater gravity, they pass to the convict prisons, are treated, as this reiterated evidence shows, without hope and without purpose and in such a way as to allow them to become habitual delinquents of the worst type and to propagate a feeble-minded progeny which may become criminal like themselves. This, as has been said, is an 'evil of the very greatest magnitude.' The absolute and urgent necessity of coping with it is undeniable."<sup>1</sup>

It was no new finding that habitual inebriety is closely associated with feeble-mindedness. Dr. Branthwaite, Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, asserted that two-thirds of the chronic inebriates admitted to reformatories were feeble-minded and went on to say that "it is more or less useless to treat drink-caused crime with punishment only, leaving the original cause as active as ever."<sup>2</sup> And to continue from the same report: "Very many of these cases sent to us from courts under this Act are none other than just feeble-minded persons, drunkards simply because they are feeble-minded, their drunkenness being merely one evidence of their mental condition. \* \* \* The majority of persons classed by me as practically irreformable are persons of this type. \* \* \* The women inebriates of this class, when out of control, go to swell the immoral classes"<sup>3</sup> Of 771 cases admitted to Bentry Reformatory, the Superintendent stated that only 30 per cent were of fair mental capacity and capable, but for their drunken habits, of earning their own living. With regard to the other 70 per cent he said: "I cannot conceive the possibility of their ever acquiring sufficient self-control to be able to keep them from drunkenness and support themselves."<sup>4</sup>

The prevalence of immorality among the feeble-minded was strikingly shown in the report of the Commission. The York Rescue

1. *Abstract of Report of Royal Commission*, p. 13.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 14

4. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

Home reported 30 per cent of those applying for admission as feeble-minded—"many too bad to keep as they lower the standard of work too much and require such special treatment."<sup>1</sup> Supt. Helen Bennington, who made the statement, went on to say: "If sent to the workhouse they can take their discharge unless certified, and often go back several times for the birth of illegitimate children, thus perpetuating the feeble-minded race."<sup>1</sup> Persons working with these girls everywhere urged the need of detention for them. No matter how carefully taught in the various institutions, many would return again and again to give birth to children with miserable existences ahead of them. Mrs. Ruspini, representative of the Church Penitentiary Association, said, "These cases of feeble minds and weak wills are a danger to the community. However carefully taught and trained during their two years' stay in a House of Mercy, they are sure to fall back into their old lives of sin from their inability to resist the temptation around them. Compulsory detention at the outset in a suitable home or asylum is the only means of meeting the difficulty and preventing the spread of vice and disease, which such lives ever carry with them."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Clouston, Physician Superintendent of the Royal Edinburgh Asylum states. "Of late years I have been devoting special attention to the previous history of the feeble-minded who have been sent to the asylum as certified patients, especially the young women. Through conversations with the patients themselves and through the inquiries by nurses and the information supplied by parents and relatives and from bodily indications where they have had children, I have come to the conclusion that such persons in a large city are subject to overwhelming temptations and pressure toward sexual immorality. Many of them have had illegitimate children and this often at very early ages. One had seven such children. I look on this source of immorality as an extremely grave one in our social life. When illegitimate children are borne by such young women, the chances are enormously in favor of their turning out to be either imbeciles, or degenerates, or criminals."<sup>1</sup>

The conclusions of the Commission were stated as follows: "In connection with the workhouses we have pointed out how strong is the argument for the detention of the mentally defective in suitable institutions; and we have shown also that, except in cases in which the home fulfills the purpose, supervision and control should follow

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p. 21.

immediately on their leaving a special class or being found unsuitable for day school education. The evidence we have now quoted emphasizes the necessity of segregation or detention on the widest grounds of public policy. It is very representative and comes from the authorities of prisons, medical officers of special schools, superintendents of county asylums, members of county councils, Poor Law inspectors, medical experts on questions of insanity and disorders of the mind, and from men of general culture and large legal experience; and others, as we shall see, such as the managers of voluntary asylums and voluntary societies support it. And we should add that this mass of evidence is absolutely consistent with our own experience and with the results of our personal investigations."<sup>1</sup>

The Report of the British Royal Commission coupled with work being done in the eugenics field was not long in arousing widespread concern about the problem of mental deficiency in this country. There began a series of studies, investigations and reports. One of the earliest of these was that made in New York City in 1910 by Dr. Anne Moore and published by the State Charities Aid Association.<sup>2</sup>

In the introduction to the above report, Dr. Moore states: "My study of the situation in New York convinces me (1) that the horrors attendant upon feeble-mindedness have in no way been exaggerated; (2) that the condition is neither circumscribed nor local; \* \* \* (3) that there is crying need for concerted action looking toward control of the situation." In giving the consensus of opinion of the time on this subject, Dr. Moore stated that those who have studied the question "realize that the feeble-minded are a menace to our present-day civilization and that the problem of caring for them can no longer with safety be ignored. They agree that the defect is often hereditary and incurable, that it leads to poverty, degeneracy, crime, and disease, and that the only way to deal with it effectively is to *provide supervision and care that will last during the whole lifetime of the feeble-minded individual, certainly during the reproductive period*."<sup>3</sup>

1. *Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded*, p. 121

2. Moore, Anne. *The Feeble-minded in New York*. A report prepared for the Public Education Association of New York. Published by State Charities Aid Association, June, 1911

3. Moore, Anne. *The Feeble-minded in New York* p. 11.



By the detailed presentation of a number of actual cases which she had studied, Dr. Moore showed concretely the prominent role of feeble-mindedness in many of the most familiar social problems. Cases were cited showing how greatly feeble-mindedness contributed to the work of relief agencies, diverting "resources which should be used for the relief of normal persons."<sup>1</sup> Other cases showed the social consequences of permitting feeble-minded women of child-bearing age to be abroad. Still others showed the relation of feeble-mindedness to crime and others the general burden of the feeble-minded upon the whole community. On the basis of the evidence presented by a large number of individual instances, Dr. Moore concluded that "without supervision feeble-minded persons are incapable of developing their own powers and incapable of restraining their impulses, yet they are constantly held accountable for failure to reach an acceptable standard of efficiency and morality. Through poverty or punishment they pay an immediate price for existence, but the end is not there. The ultimate cumulative burden of their criminality, of their immorality and of their defective, illegitimate children is ever growing. For this the public is paying and will continue to pay until by proper segregation, crime, immorality and increase of their kind are effectively prevented among the feeble-minded."<sup>2</sup>

Under the leadership of Dr. Bernard Glueck, former Director of the Psychiatric Clinic, Sing Sing Prison, a study was made of about 600 consecutive admissions to Sing Sing during a period of nine months.<sup>3</sup> Since this study revealed the fact that not less than two-thirds or 66.8 per cent of the admissions studied had already served one or more previous terms in prisons or reformatories, the reasons for such a state of affairs were diligently sought. It became necessary to find a more scientific explanation than the one heretofore advanced, that such individuals were instinctive criminals or predestined to spend lives of crime. In this connection, Dr. Glueck found that no less than 59 per cent of the 608 cases evinced, in addition to the various conduct disorders, some form of nervous or mental abnormality, which had in some way affected their be-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p. 13

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 66

<sup>3</sup> Glueck, Bernard. *Concerning Prisoners*. Reprinted from *Mental Hygiene*, Vol. II, No. 2, April, 1918

Dr. Glueck is at present Director of the Bureau of Children's Guidance, New York City

havior. Twelve per cent were insane or mentally deteriorated; 18.9 per cent were classified as psychopathic; while 28.1 per cent were intellectually defective. Recidivism was found in 80.6 per cent of the intellectual defectives.

To quote Dr Glueck: "Nor is it a mere coincidence that the group of sexual offenders, on the whole the most dangerous to social integrity, contained 70 per cent of mentally pathological cases as against a proportion of 58.8 per cent and of 57.2 per cent among the men sentenced for pugnacious and for acquisitive crimes respectively." \* \* \* One hundred and seventy-one or 28 per cent of all the cases studied by us were found intellectually defective. Considering the 98 natives alone, because better studies were possible among them, we find that 79 or 80.6 per cent of this group were repeated offenders who had already undergone an average of 3.5 sentences, and no less than 58.2 per cent had been confined in some juvenile reformatory on one or more occasions. The above estimate of the extent of mental deficiency among our prisoners has been very carefully and very conservatively made."<sup>2</sup>

Alarm concerning the social consequences of feeble-mindedness soon became country-wide. Along with the studies just considered, there was published during this period a great mass of material on the subject.<sup>3</sup> The published material ranged from cautious, careful collections of information open, at the present time, merely to modification and shifting of emphasis, to the more precipitate ones which made of feeble-mindedness a terrifying social spectre. Practically all, however, agreed that feeble-mindedness "is the mother of crime, pauperism and degeneracy."

The report of the Massachusetts Vice Commission in 1914 registered as feeble-minded 51 per cent of 300 cases of prostitution and included among those rated as normal, 71 or 23 per cent of the

1 *Ibid*, p. 2.

2. *Ibid*, p. 10

3. To name just a few of the publications.

Neff, J. S., Laughlin, S. and Cornell, W. S. *Public Provision for the Feeble-minded*. 1911.

Carlsle, C. L. *Problem of the Mental Defective and Delinquent*. 1918

Kostr, Mary S. *The Family of Sam Sixty*. Ohio Board of Administration. 1916

Johnson, A. and Lane, M. J. *The Menace of the Mentally Defective*. Boston.

Barr, M. W. *The Prevention of Mental Defect—The Duty of the Hour*. Penna. 1916.

Peyton, D. C. *Crime as an Expression of Feeble-mindedness*. Indiana. 1913.

Hart, H. H. *The Extinction of the Defective Delinquent*. 1913.

Crocker, Courtenay *Defective Delinquents*. Boston

whole number who measured up only to the eleven-year level.<sup>1</sup> Tests made by Dr. Edith L. Spaulding of the Reformatory for Women, South Farmington, Massachusetts, in eleven houses of prostitution resulted in the following figures:

23 or 46 per cent—normal	} 54 per cent tested between 7 and 10 years mentally
18 or 36 per cent—10 years	
5 or 10 per cent— 9 “	
3 or 6 per cent— 8 “	
1 or 2 per cent— 7 “	} Four of the normal ones were “madames.”
	Average mental age, 10 years <sup>2</sup>

An exhaustive study was made by the Prison Association of New York of 700 present and former inmates of Elmira Reformatory.<sup>3</sup> To quote from this report: “To the reformatory may be committed male persons between the ages of 16 and 30 convicted for the first time of felony. Reformatory methods are based on the assumption that prisoners of normal or average mentality will be benefited by their career at the institution. Yet the senior physician of Elmira Reformatory, Dr. Christian, has stated recently that his records—extending over several years—show that at least 39 per cent of the inmates are mentally defective and 70 per cent below a normal standard.”<sup>4</sup> In a similar connection, Dr. Max G. Schlapp states: “The New York Reformatory at Elmira finds 37 per cent of its inmates clearly feeble-minded; the New Jersey Reformatory at Rahway 33 per cent; the New York Reformatory for Women at Bedford, 37 per cent; the Mass. Industrial School for Girls at Lancaster, 50 per cent and the Maryland Industrial School for Girls, at Baltimore, 60 per cent.”<sup>5</sup>

A careful study made by Dr. V. V. Anderson cannot be overlooked.<sup>6</sup> Quoting briefly from his report: “One of the most important if not the most important group of which society needs to take cognizance is the feeble-minded. The feeble-minded furnish the substantial nucleus of that most expensive body of individuals who clog the machinery of justice, who spend their lives in and out of

1 McCord, C. P. *One Hundred Female Offenders*. Read before the Capital District Conference of Charities and Correction, Albany, March, 1915. p. 3

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4

3 Lewis, O. F. *The Feeble-minded Delinquent*. Study financed by the Sage Foundation

4 *Ibid.*, p. 1

5 Schlapp, M. G. *The Mentally Defective as Cases in the Courts of New York City*. Reprinted from the *Medical Record*, 1915, p. 19

6 Anderson, V. V. *Mental Disease and Delinquency*. 1919

penal institutions, and furnish data for the astonishing facts of recidivism<sup>1</sup>—facts which are serving to awaken our social conscience to the need of more adequate treatment under the law for repeated offenders.”<sup>2</sup> \* \* \* “The relationship that these two conditions (syphilis and gonorrhea) bear to feeble-mindedness need not be enlarged upon here. Venereal disease and feeble-mindedness form a combination as productive of human wretchedness and misery as any scourge that has ever afflicted mankind. Twenty-three per cent of the women at the Reformatory at Framingham, Mass., who were fit subjects for permanent segregation on account of mental defect, showed 90 per cent of gonorrhea, and 60 per cent of syphilis.”<sup>3</sup> Dr. Anderson states in his report that at least 30 per cent in representative penal institutions for women in New York are feeble-minded.

In a pamphlet entitled “The Degenerate Children of Feeble-minded Women” is found the following: “Practically all poor, feeble-minded women at large become the mothers of illegitimate children soon after reaching the age of puberty. \* \* \* The histories of these feeble-minded women and their feeble-minded children are practically the same. Their unfortunate birth, helplessness, pauperism, and ruin is part of a continuous series whereby the community is constantly supplied with the elements of degeneracy.”<sup>4</sup> “The Mentality of the Unmarried Mother,” by Jean Weidensall, reports the percentage of feeble-mindedness as determined by two supplementary systems of mental tests among an unselected series of unmarried mothers, from the obstetrical service of the Cincinnati General Hospital. “An analysis of the data reveals a high percentage of feeble-mindedness and points clearly to the fact that the disposal of cases is bound to be entirely unsatisfactory, no matter how efficient the social service work, until there is enacted a law providing at least for the permanent segregation of the defective delinquents in institutions of the industrial type.”<sup>5</sup> \* \* \* “The results of the tests lead to the conclusion that not more than 20 per cent of the unmarried mothers can be safely pronounced normal. \* \* \* From 40 to 45 per cent of

1. “Justice Rhodes of England, writing in the British Medical Journal, asks what can it mean that of 180,000 convictions in a given year, more than 10,000 have been convicted upwards of 20 times before” *Ibid.*, p. 2.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

4. Neff, J. S., Laughlin, S., and Cornell, W. S. *The Degenerate Children of Feeble-minded Women*. Dept. of Public Health and Charities, Phila., Pa. 1910. p. 4.

5. Weidensall, Jean. *The Mentality of the Unmarried Mother*. Reprint of report at National Conference of Social Work, Pittsburgh 1917. p. 1.

the unmarried mothers are almost without question so low-grade mentally as to make life under institutional care the only happy one for themselves and the most economical and the only safe arrangement for society."<sup>1</sup>

The Bureau of Juvenile Research reported in 1915 mental examinations of 671 boys—nearly ten months' admissions to the Boys' Industrial School of Ohio and 329 girls—almost twelve months' admissions to the Girls' Industrial Home of that State.<sup>2</sup> By the regular year scale, Binet-Simon examinations, 57 per cent of these juveniles (570 of the 1,000) were<sup>3</sup> found to be mental defectives—definitely feeble-minded.

Especially in the light of the chapters following this, the following quotation is of interest. "The feeble-minded are unable to follow regular employment and therefore add to the number of 'floating' or irregular employees. Owing to their tendency to become criminals and paupers, and to their inability to comprehend the principles of right living and personal hygiene, this group of individuals forms a large proportion of the penal population and adds materially to the spread of communicable diseases. From an economic, sanitary, and sociological standpoint the State of Arkansas should provide an institution for the segregation, care and training of its feeble-minded."<sup>4</sup>

One could go on with such statements indefinitely so great is the bulk of material published on this side of the question. To do so would be merely to rehearse what has been said heretofore. To give the consensus of these scattered opinions, "Our data here reveal that illegitimacy, attempted murder, theft, forgery, arson, prostitution, drunkenness, destitution, and disease are salient features of the social careers of these incompetents."<sup>4</sup>

In 1912, Dr. Walter E. Fernald, widely known authority on feeble-mindedness, who has since frankly modified his views, gave a comprehensive address before the Massachusetts Medical Society, on the subject of feeble-mindedness as it was then regarded—"the synonym of human inefficiency and one of the great sources of

1. *Ibid*, p 7

2. Haines, T. H. *The Mental Examination of Juvenile Delinquents*. Bureau of Juvenile Research, Ohio 1915

3. Treadway, W. L. *The Feeble-minded Their Prevalence and Needs in the School Population of Arkansas* Reprint No 379 from the Public Health Reports 1916 p 17.

4. Schlapp, M. G. *An Economic and Social Study of Feeble-minded Women* Reprinted from the *Medical Record*, June, 1914 p 14

human wretchedness and degradation." To quote from this address: "The past few years have witnessed a striking awakening of professional and popular consciousness of the widespread prevalence of feeble-mindedness and its influence as a source of wretchedness to the patient himself and to his family, and as a causative factor in the production of crime, prostitution, pauperism, illegitimacy, intemperance and other complex social diseases."<sup>1</sup> And again: "The social and economic burdens of uncomplicated feeble-mindedness are only too well known. The feeble-minded are a parasitic, predatory class, never capable of self-support or of managing their own affairs. \* \* \* They cause unutterable sorrow at home and are a menace and danger to the community. \* \* \* Feeble-minded women are almost invariably immoral and if at large usually become carriers of venereal disease or give birth to children who are as defective as themselves. \* \* \* Every feeble-minded person, especially the high-grade imbecile, is a potential criminal, needing only the proper environment and opportunity for the development and expression of his criminal tendencies."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Fernald did not stop with a presentation of the serious facts in the case but went on to make recommendations, features of which were a program for taking a census of the feeble-minded, complete segregation of the feeble-minded, especially the women of child-bearing age and increased institutional provision. In speaking of this latter recommendation, Dr. Fernald said: "The cost of this provision will be great, but not as great as the present cost of caring for these same persons, to say nothing of their progeny, in future generations. It would cost less money, be more economical in social life, and of immense value morally. *These people are never self-supporting*, but are eventually supported by the public in some way."<sup>3</sup> \* \* \* It is most important that the physician should recognize the so-called 'borderline cases,' where the intellectual defect is apparently slight, and is overshadowed by the immoral and criminal tendencies. These cases may be glib and plausible, often bright-looking and attractive, but are unable to apply themselves at school

1 Fernald, W. E. *The Burden of Feeble-mindedness*. Reprinted from the Medical Communications of the Mass Medical Society. Vol XXIII p 3

2 *Ibid.*, p. 7

3. *Ibid.*, p. 10

or at work without constant supervision, and are wholly indifferent to the consequences of their behavior and actions. *The inability to get or keep a situation or to support themselves is most significant*"<sup>1</sup>

Such was the social indictment of the feeble-minded. The views herein expressed from many sources reflect the general opinion which prevailed until very recently with regard to the social implications of this problem. What the results of this attitude were in terms of social action or measures of control is shown in the following chapter.

1. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

## CHAPTER V

### THE ALARMIST STAGE

With such an array of evidence, a true indictment of mental deficiency as a social evil of tremendous proportions had been found. It had all taken place in an exceedingly short space of time as those things go. In 1900, with the exception of the small beginnings of the special class movement in the public schools, mental deficiency appeared almost entirely as an institutional problem and interest in it was confined for the most part to those directly concerned in the custodial care of the inmates of these institutions. In the country at large, some 12,000 cases of feeble-mindedness, principally of the obvious and low-grade type, were being cared for in State institutions. Judged by the number of cases under care and the public recognition it received, or rather failed to receive, feeble-mindedness in 1900 was an exceedingly small and insignificant social problem.

By 1915, as a result of the revelations shown in the preceding chapters, mental deficiency had focused public attention as perhaps the largest and most serious social problem of the time. The many articles, pamphlets, and official reports which appeared, the many commissions, agencies and committees that were organized to cope with the problem were an evidence of this. There was widespread alarm. A number of States, among them New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Kansas, Minnesota and Virginia, appointed official investigating commissions to make a survey of the problem and recommend what action should be taken.

The principal concern was over the large number of mental defectives discovered to be at large in the community. Estimates based on various surveys which preceded the findings of the army tests, placed the number of the feeble-minded outside of institutions in New York State, for example, conservatively at 40,000. This estimate taken together with the current views on the biological and social implications of feeble-mindedness was rightly occasion for grave concern. There were some in whom that "must do something" attitude described by Spencer rapidly developed, who suggested the



taking of radical measures. Among the most familiar of these radical programs, which would have aimed at wiping out all mental deficiency at one fell blow, was that of euthanasia, putting the feeble-minded to death by some merciful means. The many reasons why this solution was not adopted or even seriously considered by many need scarcely be enumerated here.

Wiser Counsel after reviewing various possible methods of control centered attention upon two measures, either or both of which were considered desirable and practicable, viz., sterilization and segregation.

At the meeting of the Research Committees of the Eugenics Section of the American Breeders' Association at Palmer, Mass., in May, 1911, a resolution was adopted appointing a committee to study and to report on the best practical means of cutting off the defective germ-plasm in the American population. The membership of this Committee included Bleecker Van Wagenen, Alstead Center, N. H., chairman; Dr. W. H. Mitchell, Hathorne, Mass.; Dr. Everett Flood, Palmer, Mass.; Dr. W. H. Carmalt, New Haven, Conn.; and H. H. Laughlin, Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island. An expert advisory committee was subsequently appointed consisting of: medicine, L. F. Barker; physiology, W. B. Cannon; surgery, Alexis Carrel; biology, Herbert J. Webber; thremmatology, Raymond Pearl; anthropology, Alex. F. Chamberlain; psychiatry, Stewart Paton; psychology, H. H. Goddard; woman's view point, Mrs. Caroline B. Alexander; criminology, Warren W. Foster; sociology, Franklin H. Giddings; economics, James A. Field; statistics, O. P. Austin; immigration, R. DeC. Ward; law, James M. Beck and Louis Marshall; history, James J. Walsh; public affairs, Irving Fisher; international cooperation, E. E. Southard.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the committee was stated as follows: "To investigate all phases of the problem of cutting off the supply of defectives, and to publish from time to time data which will aid the student of social affairs in weighing any particular phase of the problem that may present itself."<sup>2</sup>

Ten remedies suggested as possibly efficacious "for purging from

1 Laughlin, H. H. *Report of the Committee to Study and to Report on the Best Practical Means of Cutting Off the Defective Germ-Plasm in the American Population. I The Scope of the Committee's Work* Eugenics Record Office. Bulletin No 10-A Cold Spring Harbor, 1914. p 5.

2 *Ibid.*, p 6.

the blood of the race the innately defective strains" were listed by the committee as follows:

- "1. Life segregation (or segregation during the reproductive period).
- "2. Sterilization.
- "3. Restrictive marriage laws and customs.
- "4. Eugenical education of the public and of prospective marriage mates.
- "5. Systems of matings purporting to remove defective traits.
- "6. General environmental betterment.
- "7. Polygamy.
- "8. Euthanasia.
- "9. Neo-Malthusianism.
- "10 Laissez-faire."<sup>1</sup>

Of these the committee was of the opinion that the first two—life segregation and sterilization—held out the greatest hope of most immediate and effective results. As to the first, life segregation (or segregation during the reproductive period) it was stated: "This remedy must, in the opinion of the committee, be the principal agent used by society in cutting off its supply of defectives. Defectives must be, and with continually finer discrimination are being, segregated from the general mass of society; and it will require but little modification from the present custodial systems in effecting the eugenical end as well as protecting the immediate present-day society from the socially inadequate individual, and administering to the latter's most pressing needs."<sup>2</sup>

As to the second, sterilization, the committee reported: "Among the students of the eugenical status and movement of mankind there is a wide range of opinion as to the extremity to which society itself should go in applying sterilization, and concerning the part this remedy should play in relation to other remedial agencies. It would be possible theoretically to sterilize wholesale those individuals thought to carry defective hereditary traits, and thus at one fell stroke cut off practically all of the cacogenic varieties of the race. On the other hand, belief in the efficiency of natural selection under existing social conditions is held by some. Between these

1. *Ibid*, pp. 45-46

2. *Ibid*, p. 46

two extremes what effective and practicable working basis can be found?

"In the program proposed by the committee sterilization is advocated only as supporting the more important feature of segregation when the latter agency fails to function eugenically. The relation between these two agencies is automatic, for it is proposed to sterilize only those individuals who, by due process of law, have been declared socially inadequate and have been committed to State custody, and are known to possess cacogenic potentialities. The committee has assumed that society must, at all hazards, protect its breeding stock, and it advocates sterilization only as supplementary to the segregation feature of the program, which is equally effective eugenically, and more effective socially."<sup>1</sup>

Summarizing its findings the committee stated: "Of the several remedies reviewed, segregation and sterilization are the ones deemed by this committee to be most feasible and effective in cutting off from the human population the supply of defectives. Restrictive marriage laws and customs, eugenic education of the public, of prospective marriage consorts, and in youth of potential parents, and general environmental betterment are all eugenic agencies of great value. In this particular problem, however, they rank greatly below segregation and sterilization, although in other social programs they are of prime importance. We condemn Neo-Malthusianism because in it we fail to find an agency able to cut off the supply of defectives, but, on the other hand, we find it fraught with great danger, in that it is more apt to strike at fecundity in our better classes than among degenerates. Systems of matings purporting to remove defective traits, polygamy, euthanasia, and laissez-faire, are condemned unreservedly."<sup>2</sup>

Eugenical sterilization was adopted by a number of States in rather rapid succession as a means of ridding the race of its defective germ plasm. The State of Indiana was the pioneer. Its sterilization measure became law on March 9, 1907. The States of Washington, California and Connecticut enacted similar statutes in the order named in 1909. Nevada, Iowa and New Jersey followed in 1911. In 1912 New York State passed its sterilization law. Other States to pass such laws to January 1, 1922, were Oregon, North Dakota, Kansas, Michigan and Wisconsin in 1913, Nebraska in 1915, and South Dakota in 1917. Some of the States mentioned

1 *Ibid*, pp. 46-47

2 *Ibid*, pp. 59-60

passed more than one statute on the subject. In all 15 States enacted such laws.<sup>1</sup>

Curiously the sterilization law in New York State seems to have been enacted without any apparent organized public opinion back of it. It was passed without any action for or against having been taken by the individuals and organizations in the State who would naturally have been interested in the measure. There was evidently some persuasive force that was effective with the Legislature, however, for the bill was passed in the Assembly with but few dissenting votes, in the Senate unanimously, and was promptly approved by the Governor. There apparently was not at that time in New York State nor has there been since sufficient general public sentiment to pass such a law.

In its operation the New York State sterilization law was a complete fiasco and is an instance of how much any law will accomplish without public opinion behind it. The law created a Board of Examiners consisting of one surgeon, one neurologist and one practitioner of medicine who were charged with the duty "to examine into the mental and physical condition and the record and family history of the feeble-minded, epileptic, criminal and other defective inmates confined in the several State hospitals for the insane, State prisons, reformatories, and charitable and penal institutions in the State, and if in the judgment of the majority of said board procreation by any such person would produce children with an inherited tendency to crime, insanity, feeble-mindedness, idiocy, or imbecility, and there is no probability that the condition of any such person so examined will improve to such an extent as to render procreation by any such person advisable, or if the physical or mental condition of any such person will be substantially improved thereby, then said board shall appoint one of its members to perform such operation for the prevention of procreation as shall be decided by said board to be most effective."<sup>2</sup> All cases were made subject to court review before action could be taken.

The net results of the New York sterilization statute were practically nil. Thirty state institutions were subject to the act and yet only one operation was performed under its authority. In the spring of 1915 a test case was introduced in the New York State courts and the statute was held unconstitutional and invalid by the State Su-

<sup>1</sup> Laughlin, H. H. *Eugenical Sterilization in the United States* 1922 Chapter II *Analysis, by States, of Sterilization Laws Enacted Prior to Jan. 1, 1922*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25

preme Court—Albany County. The case was appealed and continued in litigation until the statute was repealed on May 10, 1920.

The failure of the New York statute might not be so significant in view of the circumstances under which it was passed, were it not for the fact that the sterilization measures did not make great progress elsewhere. In reviewing the progress of eugenical sterilization in the United States to January 1, 1922, Dr. Laughlin points out that of the 15 states originally enacting such statutes, nine states still had such laws nominally in force, viz., California, Connecticut, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington, and Wisconsin. He considers the law as "functioning in a very satisfactory manner" only in California and Nebraska. The law is being applied "to a very limited extent" in Connecticut, North Dakota and Wisconsin. In Kansas, Iowa, and South Dakota, the law is not functioning at all.<sup>1</sup>

From this summary we may readily see that sterilization as a measure of eugenic control, instead of making headway, is tending to fall into disuse. It is of interest to note how much has actually been accomplished to date by this method. According to the figures which Dr. Laughlin gives, the total number of such operations in the entire fifteen states, which at one time or another had these statutes, from 1907 to 1921, was 3,233. Of this total, 1,853 of the operations were performed on males, and 1,380 on females. Only 403 of the operations were performed on the feeble-minded, the remaining being on the insane (2,700) and the criminal (130). Compare these 403 operations with the estimated total number of the feeble-minded, and it will readily be seen how little eugenical sterilization has accomplished as a measure of control.<sup>2</sup>

Among the careful students of the eugenics problem, sterilization was never recommended as a panacea or as a substitute for segregation. It was only less informed persons who seized upon the idea and regarded it as a quick solution for a pressing problem. The second report of the Committee to Study and to Report on the Best Practical Means of Cutting off the Defective Germ-Plasm stated clearly that the relation between segregation and sterilization is "automatically complementary."<sup>3</sup> It was the idea of this Committee

1. *Ibid.*, p. 97

2. *Ibid.*, p. 96

3. Laughlin, H. H. *Report of the Committee to Study and to Report on the Best Practical Means of Cutting Off the Defective Germ-Plasm in the American Population*. II *The Legal, Legislative and Administrative Aspects of Sterilization*. Eugenics Record Office Bulletin No. 10-B. 1914 p. 9.

that sterilization should be performed only when segregation was impossible or the institutional patient was about to be returned to community life.<sup>1</sup>

There seem to be several reasons why sterilization has thus far failed as a practical measure of control, aside from legal considerations of the infringement of the rights of the individual. Among these reasons, the following may be mentioned as the most important:

1. Public opinion has apparently disapproved of sterilization on humanitarian grounds.

2. The question of doubt as to diagnosis and prognosis, and the difficulty of drawing the fine line between those who should and should not be deprived of procreative powers have served as deterrents in making the decision on a concrete case.

3. Many informed persons have opposed sterilization as tending toward the spread of immorality and venereal disease by giving liberty to the individual together with the assurance of immunity from pregnancy and its consequences.

4. The changing aspects of the relation of heredity to mental deficiency which will be described in the next chapter, have served to raise doubt as to how much may be gained by sterilization.

While there was from the first much disagreement on the subject of sterilization, there was a very general consensus of opinion in favor of segregation as the most practicable and acceptable means of control. As we have seen, the Committee to Study and to Report on the Best Practical Means of Cutting Off the Defective Germ-Plasm in the American Population, believed that "this remedy (segregation) must, in the opinion of the Committee, be the principal agent used by society in cutting off its supply of defectives."<sup>2</sup>

We shall consider particularly here the experience of New York State in the development of the segregation program. In 1900 New York State had three institutions for mental defectives; Syracuse with a population of 532; Newark with a population of 415; and Rome with a population of 356. In addition, the New York City institution on Randall's Island cared for 420 feeble-minded persons, making a total of 1,723 under care in New York State in that year.

<sup>1</sup> Laughlin, H. H. *Report of the Committee to Study and to Report on the Best Practical Means of Cutting Off the Defective Germ-Plasm in the American Population*. II. *The Legal, Legislative and Administrative Aspects of Sterilization*. Eugenics Record Office. Bulletin No. 10-B. 1914. p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Laughlin, H. H. Bulletin No 10-A. p. 46.

Ten years later the institutional provision for the feeble-minded in New York State was still limited to these four institutions, but their capacity had been considerably increased. In 1910 Syracuse housed 556 inmates, Newark 795, Rome 1,041 and Randall's Island, 1,007, making a total of 3,399 under care in that year. This represented an increase during the decade of 96 per cent in institutional provision for the feeble-minded, as compared with a general population increase of 25 per cent. This increase in institutional capacity was doubtless the result of the general awakening to the significance of mental defect in that decade.

In 1907, the degree of overcrowding in the existing State institutions for the feeble-minded had become so dangerous and the waiting lists of urgent cases so long that the Legislature in that year was prompted to take action in creating a new institution for the feeble-minded which is now known as Letchworth Village, located at Thiells, Rockland County, N. Y. This institution was planned to accommodate 2,500 patients and to be a model of its kind. There were many delays, however, in its development, and it was not until July 11, 1911, that it received its first patients.

It was in the year 1910 that the first organized effort to develop a more adequate segregation program for New York State was begun. In that year the Public Education Association of New York began a study of the after-life of feeble-minded children who had gone out from the New York City public schools. This study, which has been previously referred to, was made under the direction of Dr. Anne Moore and was published in June, 1911, by the State Charities Aid Association.<sup>1</sup> The published study, while based on feeble-minded children in New York City, came to have a wider significance and was the means of calling attention to feeble-mindedness as a State problem. Dr. Moore emphasized the fact that "The only way to deal with it effectively is to provide supervision and care that will last during the whole lifetime of the feeble-minded individual, certainly during the reproductive period."<sup>2</sup> As a program of control and prevention, Dr. Moore recommended:

"1. Adequate provision for the feeble-minded in institutions designed for their education and welfare.

"2. A proper segregation law involving separation of the sexes

1. Moore, Anne. *The Feeble-minded in New York* 1911.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

which will prevent propagation of their kind and ill-advised contact with the world at large.

- "3. A marriage law which will require a clean bill of health and evidence of normal mind before a license is issued."

The publication of this report was the means of stimulating the first extensive public interest in New York State in the control of this problem. An immediate result was the appointment by the State Charities Aid Association of a special committee on Provision for the Feeble-minded which was organized to carry on an educational campaign and to secure more satisfactory care for the mentally defective. The Committee worked principally along publicity and legislative lines and stressed particularly the importance of developing adequate institutional facilities. The State Charities Aid Association through this Committee and later through its Committee on Mental Hygiene was active, together with the New York Committee on Feeble-mindedness (later merged with the Committee on Mental Hygiene of the State Charities Aid Association) in urging upon the Legislature from year to year the necessity of increasing institutional provision for the feeble-minded. Careful studies of the problem were made by the Association from time to time and appeals to the Legislature were based upon telling, concrete evidence. Several special numbers of the S. C. A. A. News were given over to the problem of feeble-mindedness, portraying the overcrowding in the institutions, the evils which resulted from allowing the feeble-minded to be at large, the way in which the problem of feeble-mindedness complicated problems of child-care, family rehabilitation, public health, etc. In one of these special numbers of the S. C. A. A. News,<sup>1</sup> it is stated in display type "State Fumbles With a Serious Situation. Out of a Feeble-minded Population of 32,000, Only 4,900 Are Cared For in Institutions Intended For Their Care. One Thousand More Beds Needed Immediately. Special Session of the Legislature Will Be Asked to appropriate \$500,000." Under these headlines is the following statement: "New York has been temporising too long with the problem of the feeble-minded. The State has long known that segregation of the feeble-minded is the only means of protecting the public, not only from moral menace of the feeble-minded, but also from the danger of murderous assault, arson and crimes of sexual perversion. The need and the means for meeting



it have long been recognized, but the State has done little and is doing practically nothing."

In an article in the same issue, Mr. Homer Folks, Secretary of the State Charities Aid Association, after calling attention to the State's faltering policy and the failure of the Legislature to meet the demands made upon it for the development of an adequate institutional program, asks:

"Now, what as to the future? What would a wise, vigorous, truly conservative State policy imply? What is it, humanly speaking, practicable to expect the State to do? What would it be justified in doing, and how should it go about it?"

"First, as to institutional provision. Suppose we accept Dr. Fernald's conservative estimate of one feeble-minded person of a type definitely calling for custodial care to each 300 of the population, involving a total of 19,000. Toward this we have a State provision for 4,000. Is it practicable to expect custodial provision in the near future for the remaining 15,000? This would involve in first cost for construction, \$15,000,000. It need not involve more than that. Would not \$15,000,000 for the segregation of the feeble-minded be vastly more practicable using the word in its hardheaded sense, than a like sum expended for some of the purposes for which the State has recently acquired a large indebtedness—namely, good roads and the enlargement of the barge canal? \* \* \* \*

"The capital investment for the segregation of the feeble-minded would be one-half that which the State has already made for the insane; it would be twice that which it is now proposed to spend for other office buildings; it would be the equivalent of less than a per capita tax of two dollars on the entire population of the State, but, of course, no tax is laid on a per capita basis. Professor Davenport, an authority on heredity, says that if we would really do this we could have most of these institutions back for other uses at the end of one generation, say thirty years. I can think of no real reason why this expenditure should be regarded as unwise or impossible. I am certain that if the matter could be brought up for popular vote, after an adequate campaign of information, it would be carried.

"If we do not provide for our 19,000 feeble-minded custodial type within the next decade, it will not be because the task is administra-

tively impossible, but because we do not appreciate it, do not really, seriously feel the truth of what we are saying about eliminating defective stock."

Likewise the State Board of Charities, under whose inspection the institutions for the feeble-minded come, pointed out the need of increased bed capacity for this class. In an address before the State Conference of Charities and Correction in 1912, Robert W. Hebbard, Secretary of the Board, said: "We must be bold in suggesting the expenditure of large sums for the purpose we have in mind."<sup>1</sup> He urged a program of institutional development which would provide for seven institutions to care for the feeble-minded, with a capacity of 15,500.

In 1914, as a result of the manifest public concern about the problem of feeble-mindedness, the New York Legislature created a "State Commission to Investigate Provision for the Mentally Deficient."<sup>2</sup> This Commission, which reported in 1915, obtained the testimony of a large number of persons relating directly or indirectly to the problem of mental deficiency in New York and other states. It also visited a number of institutions outside the State. The report of this Commission confirmed the inadequacy of the existing State institutions for the mentally defective. These institutions, it pointed out, then provided for not more than 3,000 of the feeble-minded, whereas the Commission had definitely learned of 21,000 known mental defectives in the State outside of institutions who needed or were likely to need institutional care. "The mentally defective man or woman at liberty," the report states, "constitutes a serious menace to the State. In many cases, the mental defect is hereditary and is liable to be transmitted with almost unerring accuracy to succeeding generations. This danger is in turn aggravated by the well-known propagating tendency of the feeble-minded, and because owing to their lack of mental balance, they are in most cases potential delinquents or criminals, peculiarly susceptible to the suggestions of evil-minded associates. There is, therefore, urgent need for a large extension of the present facilities of the State institutions for the care and custody of the dependent mental defective." This Commission also strongly urged separate institutions for the confirmed male and female defective delinquents where such habitual social offenders might have indefinite custodial care.

1. p. 185.

2. Laws of 1914, Chapter 272

Notwithstanding the determined efforts of organizations and individuals, of official boards and commissions, the segregation program did not make significant progress in the decade 1910-1920 in New York State or in any other State. As we have seen, the New York State institutions, together with the New York City institution on Randall's Island, provided in 1910 accommodations for 3,400 feeble-minded persons. In this decade, no new institution was created, although Letchworth Village, which was established in 1907, was first opened for the reception of patients in 1911. Appropriations were dealt out, however, on such a meagre scale from year to year, for the development of Letchworth Village, that by 1920 it provided accommodations for only 811 inmates. On July 1, 1920, the four State institutions for the feeble-minded, Newark, Rome, Syracuse and Letchworth Village, together, provided accommodations for 4,406 patients. At the same time, Randall's Island accommodated an additional 1,515, making a total of 5,921 feeble-minded persons provided for in institutions in that year. This may be compared with 3,400 bed capacity in 1910, representing an increase of 74 per cent in institutional provision in the decade. In the same period, the general population increase was 14 per cent.

Thus it will be seen that in spite of the alarms that were spread regarding feeble-mindedness and the concentration of effort on the part of all concerned toward rapid enlargement of institutional facilities for the feeble-minded, the segregation program did not make substantial headway in comparison with the then-known size of the problem. In other words, the provision in ten years' time of 2,500 additional beds after the expenditure of so much effort, did not loom large as compared with the conservative estimate of 40,000 feeble-minded persons in the State outside of institutions, especially when it is born in mind that the aim of the segregation program was to segregate all of the feeble-minded during their lifetime or at the least during the reproductive period. The interference of the war may perhaps be blamed for the failure of the State authorities to provide more liberally for new construction. There is no doubt that war conditions did result in a reduction of appropriations for such purposes at Albany, but even if the appropriations of the years before and after the war for new construction for the feeble-minded were spread out over the ten-year period, the result would not be a very much greater number of beds than that now provided. In

fact to date, (February, 1923) the capacity of the State institutions for the feeble-minded, together with Randall's Island, amounts to only 6,625.

If provision at all approaching that required by the segregation program as formerly conceived were made, that is, if institutional accommodations were made available for all the feeble-minded in the State during the reproductive period, there would need to be at least 20,000 institutional beds and if the results of the army examinations be taken, the provision would need to be very much greater than that.

As a matter of fact, the State Commission for Mental Defectives, after a careful analysis of the problem, and consultation with many experts, has set as a goal of institutional provision for the immediate future, 10,000 beds. In other words, this means that the practical impossibility under the greatest pressure of obtaining from the Legislature and ultimately the taxpayers of the State, appropriations sufficient to provide anything like complete segregation of the feeble-minded, has led to the development of a program of much more modest demands. These more modest demands have resulted not merely from the inability to obtain institutional accommodations on a large scale, but also from the belief, as the problem is further studied, that by no means all of the feeble-minded need for their own protection or for the best interests of the community, institutional care.

Inasmuch as the two former accepted measures of control have, therefore, been able to meet the problem of feeble-mindedness only in small part, it has been a matter of practical necessity to develop other methods of social control. It is with these other methods that this thesis particularly deals.

## CHAPTER VI

### NEWER ASPECTS OF HEREDITY AND BEHAVIOR

The growing estimates of the number of mental defectives in the population and the apparent failure of the programs of sterilization and segregation to cope with the problem in any extensive way would have been the cause of ever-increasing alarm, had it not been for the development at this time of certain extra-institutional methods of control, and the finding, as a result of further studies, of data more or less modifying previously accepted views as to heredity and behavior. The development of the extra-institutional measures will be considered in the chapters following this. In this chapter the newer aspects of heredity and behavior will be discussed.

The "Hill Folk" study by Davenport and Danielson, published by the Eugenics Laboratory at Cold Spring Harbor in 1912, yielded data that apparently did not bear out the first law of heredity enunciated previously by Dr. Davenport.<sup>1</sup> In this study it was found that in the number of matings which occurred between two definitely feeble-minded persons (nulliplex for normality), the proportion of defective offspring was not 100 per cent as should have been expected, but only 77.3 per cent. Dr. Samuel J. Holmes<sup>2</sup> discounts these results because in the published study the description of the mental state of the individuals listed as feeble-minded does not convince him that they were actually feeble-minded. The evidence for feeble-mindedness in these cases, however, seems to be just as substantial as in previous studies of the family history of defective stock which have been so commonly accepted at face value. In any event the findings of Davenport and Danielson in this study and the hypothesis which they advance to explain those findings are in accord with a view of the problem which is coming to be increasingly accepted by the closest students of mental deficiency. This suggested hypothesis is that feeble-mindedness instead of being a unit Mendelian character in itself, may be rather a composite term for a number of different kinds of mental deficiencies, each of which may singly operate as a unit character. To quote the authors:

1. See Chapter III.

2. Holmes, S. J. *The Trend of the Race* 1921 p. 34

"These facts (differences in type of the feeble-minded) raise the question whether an analysis on the basis of high and low grades of feeble-mindedness is not too broad. We may find one case of feeble-mindedness wherein the individual is cruel and keen in the pursuit of mischief, but unable to learn, and another case in which he is kind and learns quite readily, but is shiftless and devoid of judgment and the ability to apply his knowledge. Such instances seem to indicate that these different traits which characterize the types of feeble-minded may furnish a truer basis for a theory of inheritance. One combination of certain traits presents one sort of feeble-mindedness, and another combination, another sort. Working on this hypothesis, the possibility of obtaining from two parents whose defects are due to different traits (or lack of them) a child who may be superior to either parent as a member of society is to be expected. For instance, if such traits follow the Mendelian principle, a man who is industrious but apathetic and unable to connect cause and effect (i. e. lacks good judgment) so that he cannot compete in business, married to a shiftless woman who is keen and shrewd, even to a vice, may have offspring in which the father's industry and the mother's mental ability are combined so that they may be superior to either parent."

Thus the authors of "The Hill Folk" conclude: "The analysis of the data gives statistical support to the conclusion, abundantly justified from numerous other considerations, that feeble-mindedness is no elementary trait, but is a legal or sociological rather than a biological term. Feeble-mindedness is due to the absence, now of one set of traits, now of quite a different set. Only when both parents lack one or more of the same traits do the children all lack the traits. So if the traits lacking in both parents are socially important the children all lack socially important traits, i. e., are feeble-minded. If on the other hand the two parents lack different socially significant traits, so that each parent brings into the combination the traits that the other lacks, all of the children may be without serious lack and all pass for 'normal'."

An interesting confirmation of the above point of view is made by Dr. Abraham Myerson, Professor of Psychiatry at Tufts Medical College, whose scientific contributions to psychiatry have given him a high standing in the mental hygiene field, in a review of Dr.

<sup>1</sup> Davenport and Danielson *The Hill Folk*. 1912. p. 9

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*

Holmes' book on "The Trend of the Race."<sup>1</sup> In this review, Dr. Myerson states: "This is introduced to emphasize the fact that the author who is not a psychiatrist or a medical man serenely speaks of insanity, feeble-mindedness and delinquency as if they were nice, easily juggled characters instead of constituting ranges and ranges of problems of entirely diverse natures. \* \* \* But there is no such thing as insanity, no such thing as feeble-mindedness, no such thing as delinquency; these are mere terms used to cover entirely different types of conditions."<sup>2</sup>

To quote Dr. Myerson's review further with reference to one of the best known of the heredity studies. "And here again we meet the famous Kallikak family. The reviewer must confess that a sense of incredulity is raised to the  $n$ -th power whenever he hears of the two lines of descendants of Martin Kallikak. On the one hand he bred a family absolutely bad, and on the other a family absolutely good. The whole story is too good to be true. Nothing like it is seen anywhere else. Everywhere else one finds, instead, good people breeding bad people and bad people breeding good people. Saints are descendants of prostitutes and prostitutes are sprung from the loins of saints, but not so with Martin Kallikak. By marrying into a respectable family, he had nothing but respectable descendants; by having illegitimate relationships with a feeble-minded girl (who made the diagnosis after a century had passed?) he had nothing but feeble-minded and delinquents. If this story is true, it is too exceptional to be of any value. \* \* \* It is far too early for us to make Mendelian laws for that group of  $x$ 's we call feeble-mindedness and that group of more mysterious  $x$ 's we call insanity."<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Holmes himself after reviewing the evidence bearing on the supposed Mendelian inheritance of mental deficiency, reaches a conclusion not much different from that advanced by Davenport and Danielson. He says: "Most of the facts of the inheritance of mental defect are conformable to the hypothesis that such defect is dependent upon a number of factors instead of a single one."<sup>4</sup> And again: "I very much doubt if the facts concerning the inheritance of defect are as yet known with sufficient precision to warrant our trying to force them into simple Mendelian formulae. Of course

<sup>1</sup> Published in the journal, *Mental Hygiene* for July, 1922.

<sup>2</sup> Myerson, Abraham Review of Dr. Holmes' *The Trend of the Race*. *Mental Hygiene*, July, 1922 p. 625

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 625

<sup>4</sup> Holmes *Trend of the Race*. p. 39

if two stocks differ by a single factor only, their progeny would be expected to afford an illustration of simple Mendelian inheritance. But since the inheritance of any human family probably differs in very numerous ways from that of any other, and since any change in any part of the germ plasm could scarcely help having a certain influence on the mentality of the individual concerned, it is *a priori* very improbable that the inheritance of mental defect is adequately describable in simple Mendelian terms. Most of the charts which group human beings categorically as feeble-minded or normal, as we class mice as gray or albino, take no account of the varied manifestations of mentality which really occur. They are liable to give a false or misleading appearance of simplicity which in fact has no existence."<sup>1</sup>

It is apparent from the foregoing that we can be certain of only one thing at present with regard to the mode of transmission of hereditary mental defects, and that is of our uncertainty. In other words, the existing state of knowledge on the subject permits of reaching no final conclusions. It merely indicates the importance of much further study and investigation. At the same time it is clear that the apparently final conclusions expressed some years back are no longer tenable. The problem is a vastly more complex one than the popular heredity chart of not so long ago made it. Nor are we in a position at present writing to form definite conclusions as to the degree of social menace that resides in the marriage and parenthood of so-called feeble-minded persons. Neither are we ready to say that they should marry, and to be on the safe side, it would seem the part of wisdom to discourage marriage so far as possible.

Plain facts must be faced, however, and among those plain facts stands this: that in no State has the program for the social control of the feeble-minded developed far enough to include by institutional care and extra-institutional methods combined more than a fraction of the reputed number of feeble-minded persons in the population (including in feeble-minded those who would be so regarded by present psychological standards). This means that willy nilly thousands of feeble-minded persons are annually marrying and having children, some mating with so-called normal persons, others with so-called feeble-minded persons. What is the biological and social import of this? We must admit frankly we do not know. It

1. *Ibid.*, pp 39-40.



may be tentatively suggested, however, that perhaps the result is not quite so alarming as we would formerly have judged it. If mental deficiency is not the definite entity it was at first thought to be, then as Davenport and Danielson have pointed out, the defective traits of the parents, if both are feeble-minded, may very probably be of different type and instead of combining and becoming dominant in the offspring, may remain recessive, while the more favorable traits of one or both parents may become dominant, raising the offspring above the level of either parent. Where the feeble-minded person should mate with one of normal mentality the chances of a favorable outcome would seem to be much greater. Even the notoriously bad Juke stock, as Dr. Arthur H. Estabrook has shown in his study of "The Jukes in 1915," was lifted to a higher social plane in the descendants of those members of the tribe who migrated to new environments and mated with better stock.<sup>1</sup> This leads Dr. Davenport to conclude: "It is probable that, in the long run, the cheapest way to improve a bad germ plasm is to scatter it."<sup>2</sup> While the present writer agrees with Dr. Davenport in not recommending that method, it nevertheless shows that mental deficiencies may sometimes tend to be bred out.

A much more important and definite modification of previous theories as to the relation of heredity to mental deficiency is indicated by accumulating evidence which reveals that a much smaller proportion of existing mental deficiencies than was formerly thought is of the familiar hereditary type. According to this evidence eugenics and biological considerations would seem to apply only to the smaller part of the problem. The need for such a modification of former views on this question is shown in a recent article by Dr. L. Pierce Clark, prominent neurologist and psychiatrist of New York City, who is Chairman of the Advisory Medical Board of Letchworth Village, and a member of that institution's Special Committee on Scientific Research Into the Causes and Prevention of Feeble-mindedness: "From Goddard's data, although the validity of his evidence has recently fallen into disrepute, it would seem that a few years ago the genetic view of feeble-mindedness purely as a hereditary causation could be accepted."<sup>3</sup> The experimental work

<sup>1</sup> Estabrook, A. H. *The Jukes in 1915* Published by Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1916 p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> See *A Contribution to the Etiology of Feeble-mindedness, with Special Reference to Prenatal Enamel Defects*, by L. Pierce Clark and Charles E. Atwood *New York Medical Journal*, May 17, 1922. Vol. 115, pp. 543-79. •

of Stockard on animals, however, and the biologic work of Davenport on the eugenics of family studies tend to discredit the purely genetic view of feeble-mindedness and to prove that it must be seriously modified as the basis for even a tentative program. In point of fact, various accidental factors of imperfect development of germ plasm either before or after conception (Davenport), the exogenous factors or modifiers of the rates of development of the embryo and fetus (Stockard), the endocrine and toxic factors during gestation, both in the mother and the child, which later are expressed in mental defect (Weygandt), must give us pause in the evaluation of the genetic view that has been until recently held valid."<sup>1</sup>

It begins to be clear that the conclusions about feeble-mindedness published a few years back were largely based upon a selected and therefore non-representative group of cases. These studies had as their case material either notoriously defective stocks (selected because of their notoriety) or the feeble-minded found in institutions and the families of these institutional feeble-minded. Goddard's famous study of the Kallikaks was suggested by the presence of a member of this family in his institution. Likewise the conclusions in his book on "Feeble-mindedness: Its Causes and Consequences" were drawn from a study of the cases at Vineland and their kin. Dugdale traced the Jukes through the members of that family who were found in prison. "The Hill Folk" study was the outgrowth of inquiry into the pedigrees of some inmates of the Monson State Hospital at Palmer, Massachusetts, who belonged to this stock. It was altogether natural that institutional cases or well-known defective families should have been selected for study because the data concerning them was ready to hand, and observation was comparatively easy. What is more, until recent years the known feeble-minded consisted almost entirely of these classes.

Naturally to show by means of elaborate investigations and a series of carefully prepared heredity charts that feeble-mindedness was transmitted regularly in one family from generation to generation did not prove that all cases of mental deficiency originated in the same way. Likewise institutional cases were not typical of all the feeble-minded. They were a selected group and the selection worked in two ways:

1. Clark, L. P. *The Importance of a Special Educational Training for Mental Defect Dependent Upon Organic Lesions*. *Mental Hygiene*, Vol. VI, Oct., 1922, No. 4, p. 709

1. The chief social offenders among the feeble-minded and the very low grade cases, in short, the most troublesome, were the ones who were sent to institutions. The quiet, orderly, industrious ones could get along outside.
2. The hereditary type was most likely to require institutional care because of the inability of the parents, also feeble-minded, to care for properly and so bring up their offspring as to keep them out of difficulty.

What was said and written about these institutional feeble-minded with regard to their evil propensities and the hereditary character of their defect may have been all true. Yet more recent evidence has shown that what was said and written of this familiar type of the feeble-minded was not typical of the feeble-minded as a class, either biologically or socially considered.

In recent years, in an endeavor to discover and be of help to the large number of feeble-minded in the community, certain of the more progressive states have organized free clinics to which parents, social workers, and others are invited to bring mentally defective children for examination, and advice as to care and training. Similar clinical studies have been made of feeble-minded children found in the public schools. These clinics are bringing to light a type of the feeble-minded heretofore almost unknown as a class. Many of this class come from homes of the better type and have parents who are quite intelligent. Careful investigation of the family history discloses no trace of hereditary taint. Very many are of the quiet, obedient, affectionate type, capable of instruction and kept at home without great difficulty.

Authoritative evidence with regard to this class of the feeble-minded has been furnished by Dr. Walter E. Fernald, Superintendent of the Massachusetts School for the Feeble-minded at Waverley, Mass. Dr. Fernald has been conducting at his institution for 37 years, an outpatient clinic at which thousands of cases of feeble-mindedness have been brought for examination and carefully studied. Dr. Fernald has also been associated in a study of retarded children in the public schools of the State, in which 4,500 children have been examined. Basing his opinion on all these cases and having in mind both the negative evidence of the lack of mental defect in the family history, and the positive evidence of infantile accident or diseases, Dr. Fernald concludes that considerably over

half of all cases of mental deficiency are of the non-hereditary type. It is to Dr. Fernald and his work that primary credit should be given for this very important modification of the biological aspects of mental deficiency. Dr. Fernald's scientific temper, his long experience in direct work with the feeble-minded, and his standing as one of the foremost authorities on mental deficiency in this country add great weight to his conclusions.

In the 1916 Annual-Report of the Massachusetts School for the Feeble-minded, Dr. Fernald wrote:

"The relations of the school to the feeble-minded child, the parent, the school authorities, etc., show that in this State we are now dealing with an advanced stage of the movement to adequately deal with the problem of the feeble-minded. It is beginning to be realized that we have been a little too ready perhaps to make generalizations. There has been too great a tendency to regard feeble-mindedness as a definite entity and to assume that all defectives are equally dangerous as to the probability of dependency, immorality, or criminality, or as to the possibility of the transmission of their defect to their progeny. As a matter of fact we know of many unmistakable defectives who in sheltered or even unsheltered homes lead beautiful, serene, moral, and useful lives, and we also know of cases of definite defect due to some environmental cause where there is not the slightest danger that the defect would be transmitted even if the person should become a parent."

Another interesting fact that begins to stand out as a result of Dr. Fernald's observations is that the most desirable social traits are usually connected with the non-hereditary type of mental defectives, and that for the most part they are found to be orderly, obedient, trustworthy, teachable, and more or less industriously inclined. No definite correlation of this sort has yet been established, but if further findings show that non-social and anti-social traits are limited largely to the hereditary type of the feeble-minded, it would, of course, greatly simplify the whole problem of social control.

Dr. Fernald's findings with regard to the large proportion of non-hereditary cases among the feeble-minded in general are confirmed by independent investigations which have been carried on at Letchworth Village in New York State by Dr. Howard W. Potter, Clinical Director of that institution. Careful clinical studies of the cases

in Letchworth Village have revealed the fact that at least half of the inmates of the institution are of the non-hereditary type. If this is true of institutional cases, it is more than probable that the percentage of non-hereditary cases among the feeble-minded outside of institutions would be well over 50 per cent.

As stated in the annual report of Letchworth Village for 1922, "Factors of a causative significance are found four times more frequently among non-hereditary cases than among hereditary cases. These causes consist of brain diseases, injuries and disorders of the ductless glands"<sup>1</sup> In the same report it is stated that the studies made by Dr. Potter show that practically all cases of idiocy are not hereditary, but have their origin in some disease or injury of the central nervous system.<sup>2</sup> Another interesting fact brought out in the report is that "The hereditary cases were under-developed physically as well as retarded mentally, while the non-hereditary cases showed only a mental retardation"<sup>2</sup> In other words, the familiar stigmata of degeneracy which have been associated with the feeble-minded in the past, are those of the hereditary type. This fact again simplifies the problem of social control of the feeble-minded in that the physical under-development of the hereditary types may both serve to identify them and in a practical way make it impossible for them to make their livelihood in the community.

Another fact of much significance which has been brought out through the studies at Letchworth Village is that most of the defectives of the hereditary type come from certain definite geographical areas which seem to be isolated pockets of people belonging to an inferior race, environments such as that isolated region where the degenerate Juke stock thrived

One other indication resulting from Dr. Potter's investigations, which he would wish to confirm further before suggesting it in more than a tentative way, is that the majority of the hereditary type of mental defectives are of the imbecile and low-grade moron level of intelligence and that for the most part the higher-grade morons and borderline defectives are of the non-hereditary type. If this on further inquiry proves to be the case, it would be an added reason for retaining in the community, so far as possible, mental defectives of the higher intelligence levels inasmuch as there would not be

<sup>1</sup> *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Board of Managers of Letchworth Village* 1923.  
p 25

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p 25

great danger of passing on even this comparatively small degree of defect to the offspring.

Evidence to the same general effect as the foregoing is furnished by the New York State Commission for Mental Defectives on the basis of the study of 1,955 cases of mental deficiency seen at the outpatient clinics conducted by the Commission over a period of several years: "Out of 1,955 cases seen at regular clinics since their inception 1,145 (58.5 per cent) cases give histories of good heredity and 810 (41.5 per cent) show bad heredity. Most of these cases were referred to the clinics by social agencies and therefore it is very probable that a larger percentage of these show histories of neuropathic taint than would be the case if all mental defectives in the communities where clinics were held were examined."<sup>1</sup>

Just as the opinions concerning the heredity of feeble-mindedness are assuming new aspects as the subject is more thoroughly studied, so also conclusions such as those voiced in Chapter 4 as to the behavior of the feeble-minded are being subjected to some revision. There has been a tendency in the past to judge the feeble-minded as a whole by those who have come to public attention by falling into difficulty, thus leaving out of the reckoning the large numbers leading blameless, harmless and frequently useful lives who did not come to public attention. A study of case histories reveals the fact that many of the feeble-minded in institutions from whose numbers most statistics as to the relation of feeble-mindedness to crime and delinquency have been drawn, come from degenerate stock and from wretched environments. Because this type of the feeble-minded so easily fell into social misconduct, it has not been uncommon to think of the feeble-minded as born criminals, predestined to lives of crime, instead of considering them as the unfortunate products of a bad environment to whose evil influences they succumbed because they did not have the mentality to resist these influences.

In his article on "Backward and Defective Children," the late Dr. Pearce Bailey, formerly chairman of the New York State Commission for Mental Defectives, wrote, "A practical difference between normals and defectives is that the latter require more special training. They must be taught to do useful things and thrive and blossom under kindness, approval, praise and reward. Their affections are lively and attach readily to whoever wins their confidence.

<sup>1</sup> New York State Commission for Mental Defectives, Fourth Annual Report 1923. p 14.

If all defectives could be brought up in good homes they would cease to be the social menace they are now. But many of them are brought up under the most horrible surroundings. Half the cases which appear before the New York City Children's Court are brought there on account of improper guardianship, which means that they have no home life at all, or that their home surroundings are such as to turn into criminals any but the strongest characters. In such surroundings, being credulous and imitative, they take on the ways of the adults with whom they are thrown. *The Lombroso theory of the born criminal must give way to the modern theory of the criminal created by his early surroundings*"<sup>1</sup>

Dr. William Healy, formerly director of the Psychopathic Institute of the Juvenile Court of Chicago, and now the director of the Judge Baker Foundation in Boston, which deals with problem children of the delinquent type, has specialized for a number of years in the study of problems of delinquency as manifested in the hundreds of concrete cases of delinquent children brought before him from the courts and elsewhere. Dr. Healy is now led to the conclusion that "there is no necessary relationship between feeble-mindedness and delinquency"

Studies of the relation of feeble-mindedness to crime and delinquency have very generally been made of selected groups, those in custodial institutions, in prisons and reformatories, in disorderly houses, etc. Naturally in such groups there is found to be a large proportion of feeble-mindedness as the offenders who are detained are the "caught" ones and the most stupid. Their cleverer comrades are quick enough to slip through the fingers of the law. It is usually the criminal of normal or superior intelligence who is the instigator and who uses the feeble-minded as his dupes. The feeble-minded criminal is apprehended and the normal criminal is so often left to become the beneficiary of the wrong-doing.

In "A Research on the Proportion of Mental Defectives Among Delinquents," Miss Augusta F. Bronner, who is associated with Dr. Healy in the work of the Judge Baker Foundation in Boston, writes,<sup>2</sup> "Now, in all studies of offenders, we must recognize at once the fact that we are dealing with a selected group, for, of course, such investigators can take into account only the caught offender. Those

1. Bailey, Pearce. *Backward and Defective Children* pp 1-2.

2. Bronner, A. F. *A Research on the Proportion of Mental Defectives Among Delinquents*. Reprinted from the Nov., 1914, issue of the *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*. p. 561

who, because of unusual cleverness or because of fortunate circumstances, escape detection and arrest, may be equally or more culpable than those apprehended. Though intelligence is not the only factor responsible for the lack of detection and arrest, yet it is undoubtedly a large one. This means that in all studies of offenders there is a selective force operating which tends to eliminate the brightest and most capable." At the conclusion of her study Miss Bronner states,<sup>1</sup> "On the basis of a study of more than 500 cases in a group as little selected as is possible to obtain, we find the percentage of feeble-minded to be less than 10 per cent while the group of those normal in ability exceeds 90 per cent."

Similar conclusions are reached by<sup>2</sup> Dr. J. E. Wallace Wallin, director of the Psycho-Educational Clinic which is conducted in connection with the St. Louis public schools in an article, "Feeble-mindedness and Delinquency."<sup>2</sup> In this Dr. Wallin states, "During the last few years it has been repeatedly affirmed that 'every feeble-minded child is a potential criminal', and that 'the majority of criminals are mentally defective.' These claims have been buttressed by figures purporting to show that from 50 per cent to 85 per cent and even 90 per cent of different groups of delinquents and criminals have actually proved, upon examination, to be feeble-minded. So far as it is possible to judge from the scanty data that have been supplied in the publications, it is apparent that the examinations in many of these studies have consisted solely of a Binet-Simon test, and the diagnoses have been based upon certain arbitrary quantitative standards of intelligence deficiency. The surveys have almost invariably been based upon selected groups of offenders, juvenile delinquents (so-called) found in juvenile courts, detention homes and industrial or training schools, juvenile and adult prostitutes found in homes and in institutions, and juvenile and adult criminals found in jails, reformatories and penitentiaries. Some of the adults have been 70 or 80 years of age and have undoubtedly presented various grades of deterioration and dementia. Sometimes the person who has prepared the contribution and made the diagnoses has not examined nor even seen any of the cases diagnosed. A survey of the literature in the relation of feeble-mindedness to crime and delinquency reveals clearly the fact that the studies which have been made by examiners who are cautious and of sober judgment and who have

1 *Ibid.*, p 568

2. *Mental Hygiene*. October, 1917 Vol I



brought to the work a wide experience with the feeble-minded and an intimate knowledge of feeble-mindedness, have yielded estimates very much more modest, usually falling below 25 per cent or 30 per cent. In fact, some of the trained examiners report only 5 per cent, 10 per cent or 11 per cent of feeble-minded cases among the delinquents whom they have examined."<sup>1</sup>

Trustworthy evidence to the same effect is given by Dr. V. V. Anderson, now Director of the Division on Prevention of Delinquency of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, in a study based on an examination of 100 unselected court cases studied while Dr. Anderson was Medical Director of the Municipal Court in Boston, entitled "Feeble-mindedness As Seen in Court." Dr. Anderson states, as a result of this study, "The fact is that the most reliable work done indicates that not more than 10 per cent of offenders in general are feeble-minded, but this 10 per cent give almost as much trouble as all the rest together. It is this 10 per cent that form the very backbone of recidivism, whose treatment has been so unintelligent, so expensive, and so futile."<sup>2</sup>

While it is to be expected that there would be a large percentage of feeble-minded women among prostitutes in disorderly houses and houses of refuge, a review of this situation would indicate that the proportion of immorality is perhaps not so much greater among feeble-minded women than normal women as has been frequently indicated. Mrs. Mary E. Paddon, formerly Director of Field Work of the New York Magdalene Home, states: "The groups tested were women who had been arrested. Is it not reasonable to believe that the more mentally alert among these women will stand the least chance of detection and arrest? The very lack of initiative and judgment which may be partly if not largely responsible for the occupation of the woman would bring her into the hands of the law and ultimately into court or an institution where she could be investigated and tabulated."<sup>3</sup>

In making a fair estimate of the percentage of feeble-mindedness among delinquents, one other factor to be considered is that not infrequently, as has been pointed out by those who have carefully checked the results of intelligence testing, the low score of an in-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 585

<sup>2</sup> Anderson, V. V. *Feeble-mindedness as Seen in Court*. Reprinted from *The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, Vol. CXXXVI, No. 12, pp. 429-431. March 22, 1917. p. 3

<sup>3</sup> Paddon, Mary E. *Study of Fifty Feeble-minded Prostitutes*. Reprinted from *The Journal of Delinquency*, Vol. III, No. 1, Jan., 1918. p. 1

dividual in the test may be due not to inherent mental deficiency, but to some psychopathic condition which has manifested itself in behavior disorder. In other words, when an intelligence test is given and the mental age is found to be below normal, that fact in itself cannot always be taken as evidence of mental deficiency because of these other elements of personality difficulty which may affect the result of the test in the same way as actual mental deficiency.

In a study of problem children from the New York City public schools made in 1917, Dr. L. Pierce Clark, Psychiatrist and Neurologist, after carefully analysing the conduct disorders in question, stated, "I have never seen a delinquent feeble-minded child of what I call the benign type whose conduct disorder was not done away with by correcting the school training and the home and social environment. By benign I mean one who has no essential inborn defect of instincts, and there are more than three-fourths of this group even of the worst types I have had to pass on. This is the hopeful message I am able to bring to you with my experience in handling this group. Most often the feeble-minded delinquent only slowly and finally retaliates upon us for the long list of wrongs we visit upon him and my plea is for us in all fairness to make a new effort to understand him."<sup>1</sup>

The indications set forth in this chapter as to the heredity or non-heredity of feeble-mindedness and the behavior of the feeble-minded are presented, not as final and conclusive, but as suggesting the direction in which the most recent evidence on this subject is tending. There would appear however, to be enough data in this chapter to show that at least certain types of the feeble-minded have distinct social possibilities and that perhaps a portion of this group of intellectual subnormals may be able through proper training and assistance, to take their places in society and become desirable and useful members of it. The chapters, which immediately follow this, review some of the work which has already been done along that line with selected groups of institutional cases.

1. Clark, L. Pierce. *A Consideration of Conduct Disorders in the Feeble-minded. Mental Hygiene.* Jan., 1917.

## CHAPTER VII

### SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION AT WAVERLEY

Not only on the biological side has the necessity of modifying previously accepted views of mental deficiency been indicated. In the even more important matter of social behavior recent studies and experiments have begun to show the social possibilities of the feeble-minded as contrasted with their well-known anti-social proclivities. It is the more significant that some of the most important of these studies and experiments have been with institutional, and therefore, the least hopeful cases.

We shall consider here the work of two institutions in particular in these respects: the Massachusetts School for the Feeble-minded at Waverley; and the Rome State School for Mental Defectives at Rome, New York. In this chapter the work at Waverley will be reviewed.

To borrow a simile used by the late Dr. Pearce Bailey, former chairman of the New York State Commission for Mental Defectives, the idea of institutional care for the feeble-minded which has quite generally prevailed until recently would compare the institution with a still lake which receives a slow influx of new waters and loses its contents only by gradual evaporation. Thus the institution of the accepted type slowly received patients as its capacity permitted, and kept them until death took them away. This was the familiar custodial care which the segregation program urged. In its favor be it said that it did securely restrain from further social damage those whom it kept within its walls. This was done, however, at such considerable public expense that no state was able to make provision for more than a small proportion of its feeble-minded. To the rest the institution had to shut its eyes. It was a case of giving elaborate care to one irresponsible, contemplating on how much had thereby been accomplished, and letting nine or more others drift to disaster and add to a fast accumulating pile of social wreckage.

Mr. Homer Folks, secretary of the State Charities Aid Associa-

tion, writing about the institutional program for the feeble-minded in New York State in 1914, showed exactly how such a situation had developed:

"The institution at ———, for instance, has regarded itself as charged with the duty of receiving a small number of feeble-minded women, free from disease, not turbulent or disturbing, and of maintaining a quiet, orderly, spacious, presentable resort, making upon the visitor, with the exception of the faces of the inmates, something of the impression of a young women's seminary.

"It apparently has never lifted up its eyes to look over the State and behold all those other feeble-minded young women who are in imminent danger in almshouses, or who are going to the almshouses from time to time to bear illegitimate children, or are spreading immorality and venereal disease broadcast through rural and village communities as well as cities, or swelling the ranks of the recognized or the still more dangerous clandestine prostitutes.

"In other words, ——— has been thinking of itself as an institution, of its laundry, its routine, its external appearance—not of the real, substantial, underlying needs of the State which it was established to serve."

The problem which faced those broad-visioned workers in this field who insisted upon seeing the problem as a whole was not one of theorising how well the situation might be controlled if there were permanent institutional care for all; it was rather a case of facing the plain fact that despite valiant effort the segregation program had not and probably would not soon be realized. It became a question therefore of making the existing institutions of the greatest possible service within the limits of their capacity. To go back to Dr. Bailey's simile, the newer conception of the institution which has gradually been developing is that of a lake fed and drained by a running stream, with ample inflow and outflow. Such an institution is not for custodial care primarily (though certain cases will of course need such care) but rather for training and finally restoring to society all those capable of social rehabilitation.

In Chapter V it was seen how, in spite of special effort, the segregation program had been impossible of realization on anything like a complete scale. The question therefore arose: Will these institutions with their limited capacity render a greater public service as still or flowing lakes? The answer to that question depended of

course upon the ability of the institution to train a given proportion of its inmates in such a way that they might safely be returned to the outside world. The followers of Seguin, who opened the first schools for the feeble-minded in this country, had done so with sanguine hopes, it will be recalled, of curing or so greatly improving the feeble-minded that they could take their places in society after their "education" had been completed. We have seen how this hope was blasted and how these institutions subsequently became largely custodial in character. The hope which has again sprung up of restoring the feeble-minded to community life has been based upon an entirely different assumption. Feeble-mindedness appears as incurable now as it was when Howe and Wilbur were reluctantly compelled to admit the defeat of their hopes. However, with the "discovery" of the moron and the recognition of the delinquencies of many of this class, the institution, which had formerly existed for the care of idiots and imbeciles, began receiving a larger and larger proportion of these higher grade cases. Dr. Charles Bernstein, in the 21st annual report of the Rome State School for 1915, writes: "It is especially noticeable that up to eight or ten years ago when speaking of the feeble-minded we had reference to idiots and imbeciles, and in not more than ten per cent of the cases coming to our notice were we referring to what today we designate as borderline or moron cases. Whereas today among the feeble-minded applying for admission here fully eighty per cent are for the reception of such higher grade cases."<sup>1</sup>

Likewise Dr. Walter E. Fernald, in the 1916 annual report of the Waverley institution, says: "It should not be forgotten that until within a few years the various synonyms of mental defect were used to include only what are now known as the idiot and imbecile groups. Particularly the whole of the so-called moron group, of whom there are perhaps more than of the idiot and imbecile groups combined, and whose presence in the community is of far more sinister significance, were not then recognized as being mentally defective and irresponsible until improved diagnostic methods came into use." Here was a different proposition from that which confronted the superintendents of the early institutions. And the approach to rehabilitation was not by the method of physiological education with a view of curing idiocy, as it had been earlier, but through *social*

<sup>1</sup> *Twenty-first Annual Report of the Board of Managers of Rome State Custodial Asylum* 1915 p 14

education with the object of enabling these individuals to get along by making the most of their innate capacities.

One of the first published studies to attract general notice to the reconstructive possibilities of the institution was Dr. Fernald's "After-care Study of the Patients Discharged from Waverley for a Period of Twenty-five Years." The great importance of this study is that it includes cases which were discharged from the institution during the time when life-long segregation was believed to be the best policy. The majority of the cases, Dr. Fernald tells us, were discharged under protest, against the advice of the institutional authorities. Quite a few were run-aways. A small number, however, were permitted to go because they had no vicious tendencies. The total number of discharges for the twenty-five years was 1,537. The small number of discharges, Dr. Fernald states, with an average census ranging from 640 in 1890 to 1,660 in 1914, shows that the policy of long continued segregation was consistently followed during the entire period. "We honestly believed that nearly all of these people should remain in the institution indefinitely."<sup>1</sup>

Of the 1,537 discharges, 891 were not included in the study, for the following reasons: 187 were directly transferred to other institutions for the feeble-minded, 153 were directly transferred to hospitals for the insane, 89 were directly transferred to hospitals for epileptics, 8 were directly transferred to other custodial institutions, 175 from other states had been returned to those states, 279 could not be located.<sup>2</sup>

The method of investigation of the cases consisted, first, in sending a circular letter to relatives or friends of the discharged patients, asking for information, as follows:

"We are reviewing the last twenty-five years' work of the school, and are especially studying the influence of the school upon the boys and girls who have been with us during the period, in the hope that our future work may be of more help to the boys and girls who come to us.

"For this reason we are anxious to know all that we can of our former pupils,—whether they are now living, where they are now living, how they have occupied themselves, whether they have been useful and helpful at home, or are able to wholly or partially support themselves by work at home, or for wages, whether they have been

<sup>1</sup> Fernald, W. E. *After-care Study of the Patients Discharged from Waverley for a Period of Twenty-five Years*. Reprinted from *Ungraded*, Vol. V, No. 2, Nov., 1919. p. 2

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2

able to look out for themselves, their problems, trials, experiences, etc.

"We especially want to know whether their stay at the school was of benefit to them, and as to what part of their training was most beneficial, whether the school work, the manual training, etc., and especially as to how they might have been better fitted to take care of themselves.

"We should very much appreciate a little note from you, telling us these facts in regard to ———. Perhaps you would be willing that we should call upon you some day to talk about these matters. I need not tell you that we should be very glad to be of service to our former pupils in any way. I am enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope, and shall be grateful for a reply."<sup>1</sup>

The social worker of the institution followed up these letters with personal visits to the family; she also talked with persons in the community such as ministers, social workers, police authorities, etc. "The information obtained was checked up from several sources in each case."<sup>1</sup>

From the concept of mental deficiency that had been prevalent up to this time, disastrous social consequences were naturally to be expected in sending these feeble-minded persons and especially the women out into the world. Histories were obtainable on 176 discharged females. Of these only 27, or 15 per cent had married. Nearly all the women had married above the social level of their own parents. They were all, with one exception, of the moron group. Eleven of the 27 married women "were living useful and blameless lives, had neat, attractive homes, bore good reputations in the community, went to church, and apparently were making good in every way." To these 11 women 34 children were born.<sup>2</sup> Three of the 11 women had been discharged from the institution without protest and at the request of responsible relatives. But the other 8 had been discharged very much against the advice of the institution and only upon the order of the Supreme Court on a writ of habeas corpus. These 8 had all appeared to be unpromising cases for discharge. Before coming to the institution they had led immoral lives, and had given difficulty while in the institution because of their active sex interest. They had therefore turned out unexpectedly well in being returned to the community.<sup>3</sup>

There was of course a debit as well as a credit side to the careers

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p 1

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p 2

<sup>2</sup> All the children appeared normal.

of the women. The other 16 married women had records of bad behavior and their marriages had turned out poorly. All of these 16 had been discharged under protest. The result in these cases was of the expected sort. All were failures as home makers. Four developed syphilis. They had records of sex promiscuity, alcoholism, and thievery. There were 24 children to this group, of whom one woman had had 10. Two of these cases, one woman with 6 children and another with 2 children, were later returned to the institution.<sup>1</sup>

Of the total 176 discharged women, 48 were found to have been sexually immoral after discharge. These 48 immoral ones included the 16 married women mentioned above, 11 unmarried mothers who had born in all 13 illegitimate children, and 14 others who were subsequently committed to other institutions. No record of venereal diseases was found excepting the four cases of syphilis. This is a surprisingly small percentage of the 176, and indicated that they were not great factors in the spread of these social diseases.

The 48 immoral women who registered as social failures, representing 27 per cent of the group studied, were cases whose sex proclivities were well known in the institution and therefore reluctantly discharged. In practically none of these cases were there responsible relatives or friends to give counsel and supervision. The women who got into trouble were those who were left to drift. There was everything therefore to make for social failure and nothing to make for social success. Dr. Fernald concludes, "Apparently women who had friends capable of understanding them and of properly protecting them did not have illegitimate children and did not become sex offenders."<sup>2</sup>

Twenty-nine women of the 176 had been admitted to other institutions: 10 to hospitals for the insane; 4 to institutions for epileptics; 3 to reformatories; and 1 to prison. Only 4 of the entire group, or little more than 5 per cent, in the period of twenty-five years had been committed to penal institutions.<sup>2</sup>

On the economic side there could be counted as assets the 11 women who were making good as wives and home makers. There were 8 others fully and "independently self-supporting and maintaining themselves in the way of getting their own jobs and paying their own bills as ordinary working women do." In addition, 32

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 2-3

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3.



women were capable workers at home to the extent of "earning their salt" and not becoming economic burdens. Thus nearly 30 per cent of the group were economic assets to the extent of at least earning their own way in the world. Twenty-three of the idiot or imbecile group were living at home. Ten of these were more or less troublesome, but 13 were quiet and well behaved and able to do simple housework, the result apparently depending not so much on the feeble-minded girl herself as upon "the character of the home and the intelligence of the family,"<sup>1</sup> in Dr. Fernald's opinion.

The following summary of the records of the women is quoted from Dr. Fernald's published article:

"For 176 discharged female patients, we have the following report

Married (11 doing well) . . . . .	27
Self-supporting and self-controlling, unmarried. . . . .	8
Working at home under supervision . . . . .	32
Living at home, not able to do much work. . . . .	23
Committed to other institutions . . . . .	29
Died . . . . .	24
Re-admitted to Waverley . . . . .	33
<hr/> Total . . . . .	<hr/> 176

"Of the 90 discharged females now at liberty, 52 are apparently giving no trouble, viz.:

Married, living at home . . . . .	11
Self-supporting . . . . .	8
Of those working at home . . . . .	20
Of those living at home . . . . .	13

"In the following table, some persons are counted in more than one classification, so the totals apparently do not check,— viz: some of the unmarried mothers are in the immoral group, illegitimacy cases in the re-admitted group, etc. The following groups have behaved badly, viz.:

Married women, sex offenses . . . . .	16
Unmarried mothers . . . . .	11
Sex offenders not included above . . . . .	21

1. *Ibid.*, p. 4

Sent to other institutions .....	29
Of those working at home ... ..	12
Of those living at home .....	10
Re-admitted to Waverley .....	33" <sup>1</sup>

This analysis of the records of the discharged women must constantly be interpreted in the light of the fact that it was on the whole an unfavorable group of cases to begin with. We must bear in mind the statement that "the majority were discharged under protest." The results obtained under these largely unfavorable circumstances were little short of a revelation. The fact that there was among the women such an apparently small amount of delinquency and immorality, so few illegitimate children, and so few children in general, that many were making good wives and that many more were so materially contributing to their maintenance, was a result not fully looked for even by Dr. Fernald himself. In short, the findings lent comparatively little support to former rather sweeping statements about the general anti-social proclivities of the feeble-minded. Dr. Fernald told the writer that he had hesitated for two years to publish the results of this study because it had seemed so much at variance with the then accepted theories of dealing with mental deficiency. In publishing the study, Dr. Fernald led the way to a fuller understanding of the social possibilities of the feeble-minded. With such results from an unselected and largely unfavorable group of cases who had simply been "let go" without further supervision on the part of the institution, it at once became clear that there were hopeful possibilities for successfully restoring to the community cases carefully trained and carefully selected as having developed the qualities necessary for extra-institutional life. Add to training and selection a trial period on parole during which the former inmate would have the close guidance and supervision of the institutional social worker, and the proposal seemed worthy of serious consideration.

The findings of the same survey with regard to the discharged males were even more encouraging. The histories of 470 discharged males were obtained. Only 13, or less than 3 per cent of the entire group had married. There were only 12 children to these marriages.<sup>2</sup> The homes of the married men were neat and clean and the children well behaved. Two of the 11 married men who had been making

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> All the children appeared normal

wages capable of supporting their homes, had been sent to the reformatory for larceny. The other 11 were included in a group of 28 morons who were earning a good living without supervision. The occupations of these 28 included teamsters, elevator man, laborer, factory hand, farm hand, soda clerk, tin smith. The weekly earnings ranged from \$8.00 to \$36.00. One of the men had saved \$2,000, and another owned his own home. "These 28 men seemed to have a blameless record in their community. They are good citizens, regarded as simple-minded men, and recognized as such by their employers and by their wives, for where they had married normal women (as they nearly all did) the wives spoke very kindly of the mental limitations of their husbands."<sup>1</sup> A second group of nearly 86 discharged cases had regular employment and lived at home under close supervision of their families. This group included a few high grade imbeciles, but consisted mostly of morons. The types of employment covered 39 occupations, such as factory hand, painter, baker, laborer, printing pressman, freight handlers, railroad brakeman, machinist, barber, etc. Only a few were common laborers. The average weekly wage of this group at the time of the study was \$9.60. A few earned as low as \$3.00 or \$4.00, but the majority made from \$7.00 to \$16.00 weekly. The behavior of these 86 was very satisfactory. They had been away from the school for an average of nine years, yet none had been sexually troublesome or evinced any criminal tendencies. Steady work, good homes, and the careful supervision of relatives had enabled these former institutional cases to become useful and desirable members of society.<sup>1</sup>

The third group of 77 cases described as of low moron or high imbecile grade, and of various ages, were not working for wages but were able to do some work at home. Eight were attending public school. "These persons all seemed to be harmless and inoffensive. No record of sex offence could be ascertained. \* \* \* In this group also the lack of serious character defect and the fact that they were closely supervised were important factors in their good behavior."<sup>2</sup>

The fourth group of 59 cases was made up of still lower grade imbeciles and idiots. This group consisted entirely of dependents. The report on these 59 cases was quite favorable because the

1 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6

homes were good and the families were able to assume the burden of support and protection. In both the third and fourth groups, Dr. Fernald explains, the cases which had proved troublesome had already been returned to the institution.

A fifth group of 24 men had been committed to penal institutions following their discharge. "Without exception," Dr. Fernald states, "they were voluble, plausible, incorrigible, and apparently inherently criminalistic from early childhood."<sup>1</sup> They had been at Waverley on an average of less than one year. Eleven had run away from the institution; 9 had been taken away by parents, and 4 had been discharged as unsuitable for this institution. In addition to these 24, 8 discharged boys had been sentenced to juvenile reformatories.

Besides this total of 32 who had "served time," 23 others had been arrested for crimes or misdemeanors but had not been committed to penal institutions. Two of these had run away from the institution and the others had been removed by their parents. "This group," says Dr. Fernald, "also showed distinct character defects from early childhood and, as well as the preceding group, should never have been released except under strict parole. Both groups were typical 'defective delinquents' and could not be adequately cared for or restrained in a school for the feeble-minded."<sup>1</sup>

Another group of 43 of the discharged males were committed to other institutions such as hospitals for the insane, epileptic, etc. Sixty-eight others were re-admitted to Waverley, of which number 7 were idiots and 42 imbeciles, and only 19 morons. None of those re-admitted to the institution had gotten into serious difficulty, but were re-admitted because they did not get on well or were a burden at home, or were not easily controlled.

Finally, 54 of the 470 died after being discharged.

The following summary lists the successes and failures of the 470 discharged male patients included in this after-care study:

"Earning a living without supervision . . . . .	28
"Working for wages, supervised at home . . . .	86
"Working at home, no wages . . . . .	77
"Living at home not able to work . . . . .	59
"Arrested but not sentenced . . . . .	23
"Sentenced to penal institutions . . . . .	32
"Committed to other institutions . . . . .	43

1. *Ibid.*, p. 6

"Re-admitted to Waverley .....	68
"Died .....	54
<hr/>	
Total .....	470" <sup>1</sup>

In interpreting these results, it must again be borne in mind that many of the cases, especially those which turned out unfavorably, were not selected for discharge by the institution, but had run away or were withdrawn from the school at the demand of relatives and against the advice of the superintendent. Furthermore, there was no after-care supervision or guidance of these cases on the part of the institution. The results, therefore, are the results of an uncontrolled experiment with a partially unselected group of cases.

The chief difference in the better record of the boys as compared with the girls is in the matter of sexual behavior. Feeble-minded boys in general are not aggressive in the satisfaction of their sex desires. Few of them have the initiative to win the affections of the opposite sex. Many of the girls, however, unless guided and protected, are inclined credulously to accept the attention of men and fall an easy prey to those with evil design. On the other hand, the number of cases with apparently ingrained criminalistic tendencies was considerably greater among the men than the women. With both sexes the survey gave substance to the hope that a certain number of the feeble-minded, after training, could successfully take their places in the life of the outside world.

Dr. Fernald's own summary of the survey as given in the concluding paragraph of the printed study is as follows:

"The results of this survey should be interpreted with great caution. As a rule, the most promising cases are allowed to go home. They have received careful training. The parents have been properly instructed. Still many unpromising cases did well. There was a surprisingly small amount of criminality and sex offense, and especially of illegitimacy. We may hope for a much better record when we have extra-institutional visitation and supervision of all discharged cases. Those with definite character defects, especially those with bad homes, should be discharged with great caution. The survey shows that there are bad defectives and good defectives. It also shows that even some apparently bad do 'settle down.' And it shows much justice in the plea of the well-behaved adult defective to be given a 'trial outside' for apparently a few defectives do not need or deserve life-long segregation. It is most

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

important that the limited facilities for segregation should be used for the many who can be protected in no other way."<sup>1</sup>

Consider one sentence of the above paragraph: "The survey shows that there are bad defectives and good defectives." That simple statement of the case has since been much quoted by those who know the feeble-minded best. It seems to be the key to the whole problem. Certain mental defectives are apparently defective in moral sense and unteachable in that regard; others have already become so well skilled in ways of crime and delinquency that to teach them differently requires long and painstaking effort. These cases can be recognized by the expert and they are the type that should be selected for segregation and institutional care and training for an indefinite period. This is the type whose particular acquaintance was made during the alarmist period. But there is coming to be known that much larger number of the inherently "good" feeble-minded, by nature affectionate, trusting, confiding, loyal, industrious, craving respectability, anxious to be like other people, ready to seize the opportunity under guidance to make the most of themselves. They are in a sense always children, suggestible and easily led. Thus, the influences of a bad home and a bad neighborhood, the scorn or ridicule of society, the sense of being a social outcast, readily make of these people the familiar feeble-minded social offender. Society in the past has not even given these people the fundamental opportunity of being trained for useful employment, with the natural result that enforced idleness leads to anti-social conduct. The responsibility for such an outcome is obviously the community's. Dr. George Wallace, Superintendent of the Wrentham State School for the Feeble-minded in Massachusetts, has succinctly said of this problem: "In considering what class of feeble-minded individuals may safely remain in the community, it is of more importance to study what communities are safe for the feeble-minded," and, he adds, "the number of feeble-minded that can be safely cared for in the community is in direct ratio to the supervision that the community is willing to provide."<sup>2</sup>

In a paper entitled "A State Program for the Care of the Mentally Defective"<sup>3</sup> written shortly after the publication of the study of the discharged cases, Dr. Fernald, referring to that survey, wrote.

1. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

2. Wallace, G. N. *The Type of Feeble-minded Who Can Be Cared for in the Community*. *Ungraded*. Vol. II, No. 5. p. 107.

3. Reprinted from *Mental Hygiene*, Vol. III, No. 4, pp. 566-74. October, 1919.

"At Waverley, a careful study of the discharges for twenty-five years showed that a very small proportion of the discharged male morons had committed crimes, or had married, or had become parents, or had failed to support themselves, or had been bad citizens.

"It has been fairly well demonstrated that the average male moron, without naturally vicious tendencies, who has been properly trained in habits of obedience and industry, and who is protected from temptation and evil associations during his childhood, can be safely returned to the community when he has passed early adolescence, if his family are able to look after him and give him proper supervision. A very much larger proportion of these trained male defectives would be suitable for community life if the above-described extra-institutional control and supervision could be provided

"The average citizen is not yet convinced that he should be taxed to support permanently an individual who is capable of 30 or 50 or 70 per cent of normal economic efficiency, on the mere theory that he is more likely than a normal individual to become a social problem. Thousands of morons never give any trouble in the community.

"The after-care studies of the female morons who have received training in the institutions were not so favorable, but many of these, too, led moral and harmless and useful lives after their return to the community. The study of discharged female cases at Waverley showed a surprisingly small number who became mothers or who married. While it is true that defectives with undesirable habits and tendencies are not easily controlled, it is equally true that defectives who are obedient and moral and industrious are apt to continue these traits permanently. *It is as difficult for them to unlearn as it was to learn* Those defectives whose tendencies are such as to make them undesirable members of the community should not be allowed their liberty, but should be permanently segregated in institutions. No other class of human beings so surely avenge neglect in their childhood, socially, morally, economically and eugenically."

Since 1918 the institution at Waverley and the other Massachusetts institutions for the feeble-minded have developed the system of paroling inmates. By this plan cases deemed suitable for outside life are permitted to return to the community on trial to remain under the continuing supervision of the institution as exercised by the field agent or social worker of the institution until such time as they give evidence of having sufficiently stabilized themselves in their new life to warrant their discharge. In supervising these cases the social worker does not rely solely upon her own oversight, but makes a special effort to interest in the welfare of the boy or girl

responsible men and women of the community so that they may have somebody to whom to go for friendship and counsel, somebody, in other words, who will furnish that direction and leadership which the feeble-minded person of whatever age, as a child, naturally craves and needs. There are many such persons willing to give such a helping hand who can be discovered and interested by a well-trained social worker. It is not so much a matter of giving a great deal of time as it is a matter of regularly keeping in touch with the persons on parole and making them feel that there is someone genuinely concerned as to whether or not they make a success of the opportunity which has been given them to establish themselves in the world.

It is significant to note how the confidence in the ability of this better type of feeble-minded boy and girl to get along outside the institution has steadily increased in the minds of those who have been responsible for this important experimental work at Waverley. In the annual report of that institution for November, 1918, we find the following statement, "It has long been assumed that a feeble-minded person could not support himself independently. The war has taught us that this is not a static problem for scores of our former patients are now working for high wages. Some of these boys have been receiving \$18, \$20, \$25, \$30, and even \$38 per week. The demand for labor has been so great that employers have learned to provide the constant supervision that makes a producer even of a feeble-minded boy. Practically every able-bodied boy of 15 years or over who went home this summer for a vacation is still at home steadily working for good wages. So many of our male patients have been kept at home to work that our industries have been greatly reduced. Nearly all of our milkers, for instance, went home at one time. We have few painters, teamsters, etc., left. Many of the boys make regular visits to the school and are clean, well-dressed and bear themselves with dignity and evident self-respect. There is a strong suspicion that in the past the difficulty of getting work and the resultant idleness has had much to do with the anti-social behavior, at least of the male feeble-minded."<sup>1</sup>

In the annual report of the same institution for 1920 we find the following: "The fact that practically all of the male morons who have no innate propensities for evil, who have finished our course

<sup>1</sup> Annual Report of the Mass. School for the Feeble-minded at Waverley, Mass., for November, 1918. p. 14 and ff.



of training in the schools, the workshops and on the farm are returning to their homes at the age of 18 or thereabouts, if they have good homes, and are nearly all doing well in every way, gives the impression that the training at the school is practical and useful. Each year we feel more strongly that with a male moron, the crucial period is from 14 to 17 or 18 years, when he either forms habits of obedience and self-control, or gives himself up to self-indulgence and anti-social conduct. If he can be safely led through this crucial period and made to feel that he has a place in the world, he is likely to become a useful and law-abiding citizen. We know full well that we cannot change the innate intellectual capacity of a defective individual. We know that each defective seems to have very definite intellectual limitations, but that he also has very definite possibilities, and our task is to develop these to the fullest extent, to keep him sweet-tempered, to give him self-respect and to make him useful.

"We formerly kept our trial boys and girls in the schoolroom classes until they were 21 or 22 years of age. We discovered that these boys and girls seldom amounted to much after this long schooling. About 15 years ago we decided to graduate all from the school classes at the age of 17 at the most, as actual school records showed that it was very seldom that any real scholastic improvement was reached after the age of 16." In this year, (1920), 62 boys and 21 girls were out "on trial," agreeing to report at regular intervals to the institution. Aiding the social worker in the supervision of these cases were clergymen and their wives, social agencies, court and school officers, and other representative citizens. The total of 93 cases on trial in this year were receiving wages as follows:<sup>1</sup>

9	.....	\$10 weekly
24	.....	15 "
24	.. .	20 "
19	.....	25 "
9	... ..	30 "
2	.....	35 "
2	... ..	40 "
2	.....	45 "
1	.. .	50 "

This amounts to a yearly total of earnings of \$102,000. Comment-

<sup>1</sup> Annual Report of the Mass School for the Feeble-minded at Waverley. 1920  
p 20

ing on this showing, the report states: "There is no doubt as to the feeble-mindedness of any of the above group. It seems that a well-trained defective with no bad personality traits, who is properly advised and helped, makes a useful citizen."

At latest report (April, 1923) 220 former male patients were working steadily for wages and during the year had earned a total of over \$198,800.

The parole work for girls at Waverley has developed more slowly than that for boys and the reasons for this are obvious. On this point Dr. Fernald in the 1920 report states: "Hitherto we have allowed the female patients to go out only in exceptional cases where home conditions are very favorable. The fact that nearly all of these cases so released have done well has encouraged us to believe that it is only fair that a large number of well-behaved girls who have been here for a long time should be given a trial. If the legislature had enacted the long-asked-for law providing for extra-institutional supervision of the feeble-minded \* \* \* at least 100 female patients now present could be returned to their homes"<sup>1</sup> In other words, the matter of restoring some of the girls to outside life after they have completed their institutional training is not so much a question of the ability of these girls to make good under supervision, but rather a question of providing adequate supervision. In the last published annual report of the institution at Waverley for 1921, we find that 80 boys and 24 girls are on the "on trial" list, reporting regularly. With the exception of two of the boys, all these people are reported as being industrious and well-behaved in every way. This work is still being carried on without a definite parole law which would enable many patients to have their liberty who are now in custody. In addition to the above group, 82 former male patients are known to be working for wages and receiving practically the same scale of wages as the "on trial" cases. In this report there is given a sample list of the work records of 21 former patients of the Waverley institution in the alphabetic order as taken from the files:<sup>2</sup>

1. *Ibid*, p 21

2 Waverley Report. 1921, p 22

TABLE 1 OCCUPATIONS AND EARNINGS OF FORMER MALE PATIENTS  
AT WAVERLEY

Patient	Age (Years)	Mental Age (Years and Months)	Years in this School	Occupation	Wages
A	15	9-6	2	Errand boy	\$ 9 00 week
B	28	10-3	6½	Locomotive fireman	24 64 "
C	24	9-2	14	Machinist's helper	24 50 "
D	18	6-10	2	Helper on express truck	12 00 "
E	33	11-1	9	Care of stock room	28 00 "
F	19	6-8	2	Farm helper	Bd. and clothes
G	29	8-1	9	Helper in mill	17 00 week
H	25	6-2	8	Roofer	24 00 "
I	15	13-10	1	Messenger boy	7 00 "
J	17	7-2	5	Carpenter's helper	30 00 "
K	27	7-4	8	Laborer	25.50 "
L	18	7-2	3	Mill, spinning room	22 43 "
M	17	6-8	2	Errand boy	7 50 "
N	20	8-3	5	Fruit handler	30 40 "
O	17	8-1	7	Cutlery factory	12 00 "
P	26	7-3	3	Teamster	23 00 "
Q	21	9-3	10	Packer	23.28 "
R	32	9-2	10	Porter	11 00 "
S	37	Imbecile	12	Odd jobs in shop	15 00 "
T	18	7-2	6	Farm helper	35 00 month
U	18	9-1	6	Farm helper	40 00 "

The most recent study which has been made of this work at Waverley is that published by Miss Mabel A. Matthews, the Head Social Worker of the Waverley institution, in an article entitled "One Hundred Institutionally Trained Male Defectives in the Community Under Supervision."<sup>1</sup> The group included in Miss Matthews' study was not a selected one, but embraced all those who were within a given radius of the institution. The boys studied had not been discharged but were still under the control of the institution on a parole status. They had been permitted to return to their homes either because their parents or friends had asked that they be given a chance outside, or because, having secured work while home on vacations, they were put "on trial." Two of the one hundred boys had run away from the School and were later allowed to go "on trial." Seven were thought to be sufficiently trained to be self-supporting and were allowed to take positions outside.

<sup>1</sup> *Mental Hygiene*. Vol. VI, No 2, April, 1922, pp. 332-342

At the time the results of this investigation were published, ninety-seven of the one hundred boys studied were living in the community. The other three had been returned to the School: one for committing an immoral act, one because he could not or would not hold a job and his relatives wished him to be returned, and one who because of his youth and incomplete training had lost his job during the business depression and was returned for further training.

By having a careful follow-up system and by requiring that all the boys report at the institution at regular intervals, the School was able to keep in close touch with these ninety-seven extra-institutional cases in the community. Some of the boys had excellent homes and required very little supervision, but the less fortunate ones were given constant oversight. When the investigation was made, these boys had been living in the community from ten months to five years. Most of them had been out of the institution from two to three years. The following outline indicates, in general, the circumstances of the ninety-seven extra-institutional cases concerned in this study:

Young boys with fairly high I Q who are living at home and attending public school .....	5
Boys with mentality of less than 8 years doing farm work at home .....	2
Boy, 24 years old, mentality less than 8 years, and half paralyzed besides, lives at home and is of much assistance in the housework .....	1
Boy, mentality 6 years, lives at home and is of some assistance about the house .....	1
In the Army .....	2
In the Navy .....	1
Taking Government Vocational Training work .....	1
Out of work, because of hard times, living at home and closely supervised .....	4
Sent to reform schools .....	2
Working and self-supporting .....	78
<hr/>	
Total ....	97
Returned to Institution .....	3
<hr/>	
Grand total .....	100

Of the 78 boys found to be entirely self-supporting, Miss Matthews has to say: "Notwithstanding the present scarcity of work, and the fact that a number have had to find new jobs, 78 boys are

working and are self-supporting, although many of them have been reduced in pay or have had to take inferior positions."<sup>1</sup>

The following summaries show the minimum and maximum wages earned by those of different mental ages:

#### Minimum Weekly Wages Earned by the Different Groups:<sup>2</sup>

Those with less than an 8-year mind earn a minimum of ..	\$ 8
Those with an 8-year mind earn a minimum of .. . . .	10
Those with a 9-year mind earn a minimum of .. . . .	12
Those with a 10-year mind earn a minimum of . . . . .	10
Those with over a 10-year mind earn a minimum of .. . . .	10

#### Maximum Weekly Wages Earned by the Different Groups:<sup>2</sup>

Those with less than an 8-year mind earn a maximum of .	\$26
Those with an 8-year mind earn a maximum of .....	28
Those with a 9-year mind earn a maximum of . . . . .	30
Those with a 10-year mind earn a maximum of ... . . . .	32
Those with over a 10-year mind earn a maximum of ... .	34

It is of interest to note briefly the types of work done by the different groups. Several of those under eight years mentally were doing hard or dangerous work, such as that of hod-carriers, roofers' helpers, etc., and were comparatively well paid. Others were working on farms, on milk wagons, in factories, etc. One boy of this group was learning the upholstering trade.

The wages for those having eight-year minds ranged from \$10 to \$28 a week. The one earning the highest wage is a fire-tender in a roundhouse. Another of this group takes boards from a saw in a lumber yard; one repairs radiators in automobiles; one nails boxes in a chocolate factory; others are farm or factory hands, errand boys, etc.

Those with nine-year minds receive from \$12 to \$30 a week. Of the two receiving \$30 weekly, one is a painter and the other a machinist's helper. One boy of the group is an elevator boy, another packs glass, and so on.

Those with a mentality of ten years earn from \$10 to \$32 weekly. Among them are found team and truck drivers, an errand boy in a bank, a canvasser, a railroad employee, etc.

The boys with minds over ten years are receiving from \$10 to \$34 weekly. One is a broom-maker, one an errand boy, another a painter, several are factory workers, etc. One boy has charge of

1. *Ibid.*, p. 333.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 336

a certain simple part of the work in a factory and has seven men under his direction.

Miss Matthews states that probably the largest group of boys working is composed of laborers and factory workers.<sup>1</sup> She tells the case of a boy with a mental age of less than seven years who earned as a laborer \$29.76 a week. A good part of his work was to mix lime and carry a hod. Although there were several normal children in the family to which he belonged, he was the only one working and his money supported the family. While at Waverley, he had been very carefully trained in the only kind of work for which he was mentally fit and he went directly from there to his job.<sup>2</sup>

The majority of the boys are employed in mills and shops where so much of the work does not require very high intelligence but does require the constant, automatic handling of simple machines.

There are many other simple types of work about factories where the well-trained feeble-minded boy is an excellent and steady worker. On the farms, too, the boys are "willing, faithful plodders."<sup>1</sup>

One instance of the remarkable results which have come from handling these cases with great patience and understanding is furnished by the case of one of these boys with a mentality of nine years who, Miss Matthews said, was perhaps the most serious case when admitted. He had fallen among bad companions and, following their example, drank heavily. While trying to rob a gas meter one night in order to buy more liquor, he broke the pipes and a drunken companion was killed by the gas. The court was wise enough to send the boy to Waverley instead of to prison. While at the School he was taught habits of right living and industry and was allowed to go home "on trial" about three years before the study was made. His people, in the meantime, had learned to understand his difficulties and were giving him splendid supervision. It was found he had been working steadily since leaving the institution and was earning \$30 a week which his mother managed for him. He was enjoying wholesome amusements with a brother as companion and was faithful in his church attendance.

Concerning the fact that these boys were found to be successful, Miss Matthews says: "That these boys are a success is due to the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p 337

<sup>2</sup> "This boy came to the School at the age of 12 years, a quick-tempered, excitable imbecile: he went out at the age of 18 years quiet, obedient, and with some degree of self-control" *Ibid*, p 337

fact that they are faithful, conscientious, methodical, unquestioning workers. While at Waverley they were trained to work steadily and faithfully, and to take pride in their work. They are painstaking with uninteresting details of their work and it matters not how simple it may be they take pride in doing it well. True, this pride needs to be stimulated by the interest shown by someone in authority.<sup>1</sup> With this and a bit of praise the boys take pride in digging a ditch with smooth even sides, or in packing bricks into a hod firmly and evenly. They will do the same thing in just the same way day after day, and they work until the bell rings. They seem to enjoy monotony instead of tiring of the repetition. As a rule they will take a direction (if they understand it) and will follow it without questioning or stopping to debate whether it is really their job or whether it belongs to someone else to do. They do what is expected of them. They will be there at seven A. M. and will not stop to reason if eight o'clock would be better. \* \* \* If they can only be made to feel that they are expected to do a certain thing there is something compelling about this feeling, and they do the expected thing."<sup>1</sup>

Another reason for their success is that they long to be thought respectable. A great many of them come from homes that have been supported by charity and visited by police. They have been ridiculed and scorned because they have been slow in school work and at play. "The joy and satisfaction they show at having anyone notice and praise them, either upon their appearance and conduct, or upon their savings or work is strong evidence that the love of approbation is a great factor in their success. Now that they have what they call a 'chance' they exert every effort to suppress their unfortunate traits and habits, as they had been trained to do while at Waverley."<sup>2</sup> They are anxious that those about them should not know they have been at Waverley or that there is anything they cannot understand. "They try so hard to be and to act like their fellow-workmen that with constant encouragement they succeed fairly well."<sup>2</sup>

While at Waverley these boys had been taught habits of cleanliness and neatness. The officials of the School became their ideals of respectability. The boys wanted to be as well-dressed and as well thought of as were the School officials. These ideas went with the boys upon leaving the School and were reflected in their manner

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p. 338.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 339.

of dressing as in other things. "They almost never get clothing that is flashy. Either their native taste is good or else it is because in buying clothing, they get things which are as near as possible like those worn by people who have been their ideals"

At Waverley they had been taught to save and when they left the School they took with them the conviction that one must somehow have a bank account in order to reach a higher level of society. With encouragement these boys have been found to save quite well, though it is thought that they save rather because "respectable" people do so and the School has advised it, rather than because they actually appreciate the value of money or realize that it will be of great help to them in time of need.

Their amusements were found to be of a simple, wholesome sort—"movies" once or twice a week, athletics of various sorts, long walks on Sundays, etc. "Few of them want or expect excitement. \* \* \* On the whole, their evenings are short, and most of them are spent at home with a victrola or games, or with books and papers, their evenings usually closing about nine o'clock."<sup>1</sup>

The case of one of these boys well illustrates what has been said. "Billy" came to the School in 1905, dirty, dishonest, untruthful, selfish, impudent and with bad sex habits. He stayed in the School for eleven years during which time he was taught to overcome these bad characteristics to a great extent. Although he still felt the same inclinations he was taught to recognize the desirability of not "giving in" to them. He became a "slow, plodding boy" and was sent out "on trial" to live with his mother and grandfather. He spent his evenings playing checkers with his grandfather and the latest report was that he had "beaten his grandfather 10,005 times at checkers, while his grandfather had beaten him only 3,025 times. His having played so many games of checkers in four years may account for his keeping out of trouble."<sup>2</sup> He was working for a meat-packing place at \$12 a week.

Only three of the one hundred boys studied were arrested. One of the three was returned to the School (the only one whose misconduct was of an immoral nature), and the other two to reform schools. All but two of the adults of the group have been self-supporting and the majority of these have helped support their families. "It is noticeable that after a boy's training has made him an asset to his family his people become interested in him and co-

1. *Ibid.*, p. 340.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 341.



operate in his supervision."<sup>1</sup> By sending into the community the older, trained boys, it is possible to admit young, teachable boys who would otherwise become delinquents.

It was found that with very few exceptions, these one hundred boys had made good. "Their success seems to be due to painstaking, constructive training received while at the School, and to proper supervision after going into the community. We feel that with continued friendly helpful supervision and no humiliating circumstances connected with it, the average trained feeble-minded boy, properly brought up and trained to work, can live in the community and play his part."<sup>2</sup>

The splendid work of the institution at Waverley in the social reconstruction of many of its inmates, as shown in this chapter, cannot be better summed up than in Dr. Fernald's own words:

"The keynote of a practical program for the management of mental defectiveness is to be found in the fact, which seems to have been proved, that those defectives whose defects are recognized while they are young children, and who receive proper care and training during their childhood, are, as a rule, not especially troublesome after they have been safely guided through the period of early adolescence."<sup>3</sup>

1. *Ibid.*, p. 341.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 342.

3. Fernald, W. E. "A State Program for the Care of the Mentally Defective." *Mental Hygiene*, Vol. III, No. 4 pp. 566-74. October, 1919.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE COLONY PLAN; ROME COLONIES FOR BOYS

Two of the chief difficulties standing in the way of the fuller development of the segregation program, it will be recalled, were: (1) The high cost of institutional construction and maintenance; (2) the social and economic waste of institutionalizing thousands of high-grade feeble-minded persons capable of useful employment. At the same time, to many of those who knew the feeble-minded best, it seemed essentially inhumane to confine in the wards of an institution many strong, able-bodied persons who had never committed any serious offence, simply because they were not quite up to par in their mental functioning. Recognizing the need of safeguarding many of the feeble-minded, for a period at least, for their own protection and that of society, these workers with the feeble-minded believed that it was both possible and desirable to remove groups of the inmates from the institution proper, place them in a more normal living and working environment where they could be practically self-supporting, and still maintain the necessary degree of supervision to protect the individual and the community.

This was the colony idea and to Dr. Charles Bernstein, Superintendent of the Rome State School for Mental Defectives at Rome, N. Y., goes the credit for having developed it in an extensive and practical way. In 1915 Dr. Bernstein wrote: "It seems the time has arrived when we must do other than make the support of the defective and dependent classes a dead load or burden on the State. \* \* \* Instead of asking the State to go on providing beds at \$500 to \$1,000 each (pre-war costs) and maintenance at from \$200 to \$400 per year for each of these unfortunate individuals, and thus rendering them even more unfortunate because more dependent, we must provide other means of care wherein \$50 to \$100 beds as in colonies may be provided." Dr. Bernstein gave it as his opinion that "something more economical and many times more humane than brick and stone walls and iron fences may meet the need."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Bernstein in fact had anticipated this statement with actual

1. Twenty-First Annual Report of the Rome State School

demonstration and had established his first farm colony for feeble-minded boys in 1906 and his first domestic colony for feeble-minded girls in 1914.

Considerable discussion has prevailed about the beginnings of the colony system of care for the feeble-minded. This has been due largely to the fact that the term has been applied to several different types of care. The Century Dictionary describes a colony as "a company or body of people who migrate from their native country or home to a new province, country, or district, to cultivate and inhabit it, but remain subject to or intimately connected with the parent state." By analogy, therefore, the institution for the feeble-minded itself may be regarded as a colony since it is made up of individuals who have migrated there from homes elsewhere in the State. Thus the institution for epileptics at Sonoma, N. Y., is called the Craig Colony. In this sense the expression, colonizing the feeble-minded, has been used frequently in the literature on mental deficiency, as a synonym for institutional care.

The word "colony" in relation to the feeble-minded, however, has come to be more properly applied to groups of inmates from the parent institution who have been settled at points more or less distant from the institution but who still remain subject to its jurisdiction. In accordance with such an interpretation, the first colony for the feeble-minded on record in this country was that for feeble-minded women established at Newark, N. Y., in 1878 as an offshoot of the institution at Syracuse. The Newark group remained for seven years under the direction of the Syracuse Board of Managers but it rapidly developed into a custodial institution of the accepted type and in 1885 was incorporated as a separate institution.

A colony for the feeble-minded according to the prevailing conception may be defined as "any group of inmates living together under supervision outside the parent institution while remaining under its jurisdiction and contributing to a greater or less degree by labor to their own support."

The first distinctly organized working colony of this defined type to be established in this country, so far as the records show, was opened in 1882 on a farm at Fairmount near Syracuse, N. Y., by the Syracuse State School for Mental Defectives. This colony is still in existence and has served a useful purpose in giving employment

and training to the boys of the institution. In 1893 the Indiana School for Feeble-minded Youth opened a farm colony of the same type. The colony was successful from the first and is still operating. It has been administered without serious difficulty and the products of the labor of its members have contributed materially toward the maintenance of the parent institution. This colony has 509 acres of land and a population of about 200 boys. The boys are employed at farming, gardening, dairying, stock-raising and fruit-growing. Custodial groups of lower-grade cases have from time to time been placed at the colony where they have been cared for by the brighter boys, under the general supervision, of course, of trained employees. The institution at Fort Wayne now has several colonies in addition to this original one. So fully has the colony plan proved its value in Indiana that a new institution for the feeble-minded recently opened in that State at Butlerville is being developed entirely along colony lines.<sup>1</sup>

Massachusetts followed Indiana. At the School for the Feeble-minded at Waverley as early as 1899, Dr. Fernald, the Superintendent, became aware of the urgent need of an outlet for some of his pupils. The excellent school training patterned on the Seguin model, supplemented by intensive industrial training had reared a group of inmates recognized to be capable of supporting themselves in whole or in part. Yet many of these the institution found it difficult or unwise to discharge. As Dr. Fernald has explained it: "We were appalled to find that, instead of a school, we were rapidly becoming a receptacle for chronic adult imbeciles, trained to the extent of their ability. There was no opportunity to exercise the trained capacity."<sup>2</sup> This, it must be borne in mind, was more than a decade before there was any thought of developing a parole system. It was also in the days before the "discovery" of the moron when the institution comprised largely idiots and imbeciles.

As a solution of this problem which confronted the Waverley institution, so far as the males were concerned, the trustees purchased 2,000 acres of land in the northern part of the State sixty miles from the parent institution as the site of a farm colony for boys. The land consisted of "abandoned" but fertile farms, together with woodland, gravel, sand and building stone. It was

1. Thirty-Second Annual Report, Board of State Charities. Indiana. 1921.

2. Fernald, W. E. *The Templeton Farm Colony for the Feeble-minded*. Reprint from *The Survey*, March, 1912. p. 26.

procured for less than \$10 per acre. The area was large enough so that the boys while still under supervision might have a feeling of complete freedom within the limits of such an extensive estate. And this in fact has proved to be the case. The Templeton colony was the first of its kind to be operated at any considerable distance from the parent institution.

There are now at the Templeton Colony 300 boys and men from sixteen to forty years of age, with mental ages of from six to eight years. They are all of the able-bodied, industrious type. They are living a wholesome, active, outdoor life and are happy and contented. Boys who are sent here on trial and do not adapt themselves to this kind of life are permitted to return to the institution so that a group of congenial comrades may be assured. The boys live in renovated farm houses and dormitories of the farm-house type. They themselves do all the construction and repair work under the direction of their supervisors. Many carloads of food products raised here are shipped each year to the parent institution. In this simple life many of the restless, dissatisfied inmates of the institution have found a release for their energies and have settled down upon this estate of the great outdoors with a real feeling of proprietorship and a high sense of pride in the product of their labors. In some cases the farm life has so brought out the dependable qualities of the boy that his relatives have been glad to take him back home, finding in him a steady wage-earner and an acceptable member of the household.

The colony plan of care and training has had its most extensive development in New York State where it first began. This colony development has been due almost entirely to the work of Dr. Charles Bernstein at the Rome, N. Y., State School for Mental Defectives. The Rome colonies have been particularly noteworthy not only because of their extent and the large number of persons colonized but especially because of the application of several new principles to colony operations: (1) colonizing of women as well as men; (2) establishment of industrial colonies in town for both men and women in addition to farm colonies for men and domestic colonies for women; (3) using the colony as a definite training center for community life and as a midway station between the institution and parole. In other words the Rome colonies have not been merely a modified form of institutional care, but they have been made a

definite part of the institution's system of training looking toward social rehabilitation of all cases which upon trial in the colonies show themselves capable of community life. The colony is one stage in the moving-up process. At the same time the Rome colonies also provide indefinite care for those "boys" and "girls" who can safely enjoy the degree of freedom which the colony affords but probably can never be entrusted to the outside world.

In this chapter the Rome colonies for boys will be considered, and in the following chapter the Rome colonies for girls.

The first Rome colony experiment was made in 1906 when a group of eight boys was placed on a farm of 187 acres about a mile distant from the institution. This was the more familiar farm type of colony. The boys were placed under the immediate supervision of a farmer and his wife who were made members of the institution staff with the status of supervisor and assistant matron. The number of boys in this colony was later increased to twenty. At the end of the first six months, the account of this colony with the parent institution stood as follows:<sup>2</sup>

Credited with supplies to amount of..	\$1,573.05	
Charged with supplies to amount of...		\$904.26
Salary of farmer and wife .....		360.00
<hr/>		
Profit to colony's credit .....	\$ 308.79	

The success of this first colony known as the Brush Farm Colony led to the establishment two years later of a second farm colony adjoining the first and known as the Bailey Farm Colony. By dividing the acreage of the Brush Farm, both groups were given 100 acres. Like the Brush Colony, the Bailey Farm was operated with twenty boys, supervised by a man and wife. Both of these two first farm colonies were purchased outright, the Brush property for \$10,000 and the Bailey property for \$5,000.

Again at two-year intervals, in 1910 and 1912, the third and fourth farm colonies were established, the Rathbun and the Lamphere. Each of these accommodated 30 boys. The first was rented for \$600 annually, while the second was purchased for \$5,000. The Rathbun farm which was situated five miles from the institution

1. The terms "boy" and "girl" are here used to denote the feeble-minded of whatever actual age.

2. Bernstein, Charles *Colony and Extra-Institutional Care. Mental Hygiene*, Vol IV, No. 1, pp. 1-28. Jan., 1920.

covered 300 acres and was used for raising fodder and pasturage and for stabling the institution's large herd of young cattle. The work was of course done by the boys. The Lamphere farm of 50 acres lying very near the institution was devoted to truck gardening and here the boys raised practically all the vegetables excepting potatoes needed for the large institution population of 2,300.

In 1915 and 1916 two dairy farms were rented at \$1,000 each annually for colony purposes and twenty boys placed on each of these. They were named respectively the Stook and Talcott after the families who had formerly possessed them, a custom followed in the designation of all the farm colonies. These two dairy farms have produced much of the milk and butter needed for the institution.<sup>1</sup>

The further development of the farm colonies was simply a repetition of the above. Aside from the three mentioned, no other colonies have been purchased. It has been found in many ways more advantageous to rent. The opening of new colonies has therefore required no additional outlay by the State. A small fund which represents the surplus from colony earnings has accumulated which is sufficient to cover the rent and initial expenses for seed, equipment, etc., during the brief period until the new colony is able to meet these items from the earnings of its members.

In all, 22 different colonies for boys have been established by the Rome State School to date. Four of these have been closed, the purpose for which they were established having been accomplished, or more suitable accommodations having been found elsewhere. This leaves 18 boys' colonies in active operation at the present time. All but two of these eighteen are farm colonies. The two exceptions are industrial colonies in town, a type of colony which will be described at a later point. Three of the sixteen farm colonies, now in operation, as already noted, are located on property purchased by the institution. Another occupies the site of a former State institution, the use of which property is donated by the State. The remaining twelve farm colonies are located on rented farms. In Table 3 on page 115, which gives the financial statement of the rented farm colonies, only the ten which were in active operation during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1922, are listed.

1. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

The list of the boys' colonies in the order of their establishment is as follows:<sup>1</sup>

TABLE 2 ROME STATE SCHOOL BOYS' COLONIES ESTABLISHED TO  
JANUARY 1, 1923

No	Boys' Colonies	Opened	Acres	No of Beds	Cost
1	Brush	1906	187	20	Purchased - \$10,000.00
2	Bailey	1908	15	20	Purchased 5,000 00
3	Rathbun	1910	300	24	Rented 800.00
4	Lamphere	1912	50	30	Purchased 5,000 00
5	Indian Lake (closed 1918)	1915	150	20	Loaned by State
6	Stook	1915	270	20	Rented 1,100 00
7	Talcott	1916	200	24	Rented 1,000.00
8	Kossuth	1917	Industrial	32	Rented 900 00
9	Akron (closed 1919)	1917	60	40	Rented 700 00
10	Dewey	1918	90	20	Rented 600 00
11	Lawrence	1918	1,350	40	Rented 1,200 00
12	Spencer	1920	100	16	Rented 600 00
13	Valatie	1920	395	60	Donated
14	Delta (closed 1920)	1920	Industrial	20	Donated
15	Smith	1920	123	24	Rented 1,200 00
16	Jay Street (closed 1921)	1920	Industrial	16	Rented 600 00
17	Wright	1921	20	16	Rented 600 00
18	Ayers	1921	40	16	Rented 900 00
19	Beck	1921	78	20	Rented 900 00
20	Rogers	1922	175	16	Rented 600 00
21	Hinkley	1922	Industrial	20	Rented 480 00
22	Verona	1922	75	20	Rented 800 00

Farms of from 50 to 200 acres with buildings to accommodate 16 to 24 boys and the farmer and his wife, can be rented in the vicinity of the Rome institution at from \$600 to \$1,200 a year, (an average rate of \$25 per year for house room for each inmate and \$2 to \$4 per acre for improved farm land with barns and other necessary equipment).<sup>2</sup> On the roads leading out from the institution the traveler passes not one but a series of these farm colonies. They are distinguished by their unusually trim and tidy appearance. Run-down farms have rapidly taken on a new aspect when they have been converted to this (as yet) rather novel use. As shown in the above table, the 16 farm colonies in operation on January 1, 1923, provided accommodations for 382 boys, as compared with 1,000 beds available for male patients in the institution proper. The following table gives figures on the value of products and the maintenance and rental costs of the ten rented farm colonies in operation during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1922:

<sup>1</sup> Rome State School Twenty-Eighth Annual Report 1922. p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Rome Annual Report. 1921. p. 16.



TABLE 3. VALUE OF PRODUCTS AND OPERATING COSTS OF RENTED FARM COLONIES FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1922

Colony	Acres	Beds	Value of Products	Cost			Total Costs
				Rent	Salaries	Supplies	
Rathbun	300	24	\$3,008	\$1,000	\$1,200	\$1,615	\$3,815
Stook	270	20	4,293	1,100	1,200	1,650	3,950
Talcott	200	24	4,256	1,000	1,200	1,863	4,063
Lawrence	1,350	36	6,180	1,000	1,200	2,432	4,632
Smith	123	24	3,939	1,200	1,200	1,921	4,321
Ayres	40	18	1,200	300	1,200	1,485	2,985
Wright	16	18	1,917	600	1,000	1,492	3,092
Beck	90	20	853	800	1,000	1,524	3,324
Hamil	40	28	2,431	800	480	2,132	3,412
Rogers	140	20	1,228	600	720	1,426	2,746
	2,569	232	\$29,305	\$8,400	\$10,400	\$17,540	\$36,340

The earlier farm colonies had been, after the first year, entirely self-sustaining, covering from the value of their products both the rental or interest on the investment, etc., and the maintenance. The foregoing table shows, however, that with the further extension of the farm colony operations, most of the colonies have not been entirely self-supporting. That is, while the earnings of the inmates are much more than enough to pay the rent on the property, they are not in all cases sufficient to meet the entire cost of maintenance. Complete self-support had been possible in the case of the earlier farm colonies after the first year because particularly good farms had been chosen and the most capable boys selected to operate them. Had colony expansion stopped there this record of complete self-support could readily have been maintained. But the purpose of the colonies is not primarily to make a financial showing. The larger objects which Dr. Bernstein has in mind are (1) to use the colonies as a means of greatly increasing the capacity of the institution in order that so many of the feeble-minded needing the opportunity for institutional training might not have to be refused, (2) to place as many as possible of the inmates of the institution capable of it in this more normal, satisfying, and stimulating environment; (3) to use the colony as a stepping-stone to parole and discharge in many cases. As new farm colonies are opened boys younger, less trained, and of lower mentality than those of the earlier farm groups are sent out. They are not expected to be entirely self-

sufficient. Nevertheless their earnings as may be seen from the table, are easily able to cover the rent and a portion of the maintenance also. All this means that the State is getting added accommodations for the feeble-minded at no cost whatever with the additional saving of having a considerable proportion of the inmates contribute in greater or less degree to their own maintenance. Furthermore, the colony for many cases means the difference between life-long institutional care on the one hand and the possibility of eventually returning to the community on the other. For patients to remain indefinitely in the institution without enough work to occupy them and absorb their interest and attention means in most cases steady deterioration into greater and greater dependence until they become total burdens upon the people of the State for the rest of their days.

As subsequent farms have been rented therefore, more attention has been paid to the accommodations which the farm-house will afford in caring for inmates than to the condition of the farm itself. The main object is to substitute for the inevitable routine of the institution the wholesome, normal, home environment of the farm-house with its small group, its family spirit, its colony mother, and indeed, father, its outdoor interests, its growing things, its live stock, and its comparative freedom. Entirely secondary is the consideration, how good a farm a particular parcel of land makes, or even how efficient the boys are as farmers. Therefore the success of the farm colonies cannot be measured in terms of economic goods produced; it can be measured only in terms of human values. It is this emphasis upon the individual rather upon the operation that characterizes the Rome colony work.

In the same way the policy of permitting boys to go out from the colony to help neighboring farmers sacrifices the interests of the colony as a farming enterprise to the welfare of the individual. When a boy has proved his value as a worker on the colony farm, he is not kept there in preference to other poorer workers as one might expect. On the contrary this proof of ability as a worker, provided it is coupled with good conduct, is an indication that the boy is ready to move on a step further in the process of social reconstruction. While still a member of the colony, he is allowed to work out by the day or week for a neighboring farmer. The boy may either return to the colony to sleep; or may "put up" at the farmer's house until his work is completed. In these days when

many good farmers are leaving the land and going to town because they cannot find help, the services of these trained, hard-working, reliable boys are more than welcome and there is no difficulty in finding in the near vicinity of the institution plenty of opportunities for the boys to work out. Naturally the demands for help on other farms are greatest when the colony farm needs its labor most urgently. But the best workers are always available for the farmers and the colony takes what is left. Thus placing first the interest of the boy and of the community means that the colony farm does not have as good a financial showing as it might otherwise have.

It is of interest, nevertheless, to consider the colony plan from the standpoint of the taxpayer. On July 1, 1922, fourteen farm colonies for boys were in operation in connection with the Rome State School. These afforded accommodations for 358 boys. Placing these boys in colonies made 358 additional beds available in the institution just as truly as if a new institutional building of that capacity had been erected. Consider, however, what it would have cost to construct that number of additional beds at the institution. A very conservative estimate of the cost of institutional construction whether of the old congregate or the new cottage type is \$1,000 per bed. A State expenditure, a taxpayer's expenditure, of at least \$358,000 would therefore have been required to add these 358 beds to the institution. By the colony plan that number of beds was added at an annual cost of \$8,600 (including rentals and 7 per cent on the three owned properties), which is considerably less than half the interest alone for one year at 5 per cent on the \$358,000. However, the rental costs of the colonies were fully covered by the earnings of the boys so that this additional bed capacity was actually added to the institution without one cent of cost to the taxpayer. In addition, the colony plan represented a still further saving to the taxpayer in the fact that the boys contributed in substantial measure to the cost of their maintenance.

It is apparent that the colony plan offers an important means in helping to solve one of the greatest previous drawbacks to the further extension of facilities for the care and training of the feeble-minded, viz., the high cost of institutional construction and maintenance. There remains, however, the more important question: is this substitute for the closer confinement of the institution safe and socially acceptable?

As a rule persons are sent to an institution for the feeble-minded not primarily because of their mental defect but because that defect causes them to be either burdensome or unmanageable. The institution therefore in so far as it is more than a place for mere custodial care has two chief functions to perform: (1) to train the burdensome, low-grade cases so that they may be able as fully as possible to care for themselves personally and to contribute to their own support; (2) to correct the troublesome, irresponsible behavior of the unmanageable group and to teach them the value of obedience, good conduct and industry. The well-organized institution is remarkably successful in doing these things. Idiots and the lower-grade imbeciles will, of course, remain almost total burdens. However, with the higher grade imbeciles and the morons, who are the most numerous group, the habit training, the school work, the expert medical observation and treatment, the regularity and precision of the institutional life, may usually be counted upon so to improve most of them as to make them capable of attending to their own personal needs. Furthermore, on the wards, about the grounds, in the carpenter shop, the paint shop, the shoe-repair shop, the chair-caning shop, etc., and on the institutional farm, the majority have been taught how to work and have learned the important habit of industry.

Of those who presented behavior problems before being committed, there will, in all probability, be some cases of defective delinquents, moral defectives, for whom the best endeavors of the institution have not availed. The proper disposition of such cases is in an institution for defective delinquents such as that established by New York State at Napanoch where they can have indefinite custodial care. With many of the unmanageable type, however, it is found that the cause of their misbehavior is not so much in themselves as in the influence of a bad home or neighborhood environment. Removed to the institutional environment the individual has just as readily learned socially acceptable forms of behavior as he had previously learned socially unacceptable ways. Many of these latter cases are not markedly defective mentally, the conduct disorder having been the principal cause of their inability to get along outside the institution. It would be unwise to return them to the home environment in which they previously failed. And yet their present good behavior coupled with their ability as workers would not seem to warrant keeping them indefinitely in the institution.

Take a group of these boys who have thus profited by the institutional training. Let us suppose they have reached the age of fourteen or sixteen beyond which, as has been shown in work with the feeble-minded generally, school training is of no avail. They are active, able-bodied, good workers. The institution has done everything for them it can. If they give trouble now it is probably because they feel the restrictions of the institutional routine and have no adequate opportunity to give expression to the animal activity that bounds in them. There is not enough work at the institution to occupy or interest them. Their former duties on the wards, the grounds, the institutional farm, and in the shops can be done by the younger boys coming on after them; in fact, needs to be done by the younger boys as an important part of *their* training. The feeble-minded boy of the type described, in his limited way, is looking for new worlds to conquer just as much as the normal boy. If he is made to stay longer within the four walls of the institution, he may give trouble for a time, but realizing he is facing the inevitable, he will eventually have to adapt himself to circumstances. That means that he will become discouraged and lose all hope of ever doing anything with the powers he feels within him. Having no chance to assert himself, nothing to look forward to, he becomes an automaton in the institutional regime. He loses whatever qualities of self-reliance he may have had and becomes more and more dependent upon the direction of those placed over him. There is nothing to awaken his utmost capabilities. Not being called into use his faculties grow dormant. He deteriorates mentally and probably physically. He becomes more and more completely institutionalized. Incapable of initiative, unable now to adapt himself to different conditions, he can get along in the institution and nowhere else. He becomes practically a total burden upon the State for the rest of his days. How commonly that has been the story of the institutional care of the feeble-minded! Wasted man-power; heavy taxes; not to say inhumane! A few institutionalized and the many left to drift!

For the feeble-minded boy whose institutional training has been completed but who cannot yet be trusted to make his way in the outside world, the colony is a real salvation. It gets him away from the institution and the institutional atmosphere. He no longer feels like a prisoner locked up for something, he knows not what. He

finds himself in the open country, on a farm in which he feels he has a part interest. He takes a proprietary interest in the place and a real pride in everything it produces. He can hold up his head in the knowledge that he is working and at least helping to pay his way in the world. With all this freedom and sense of freedom, this outlet for suppressed energies, the boys are still, without being over-conscious of it, under careful supervision. From the standpoint of segregation they are just as safe there as in the institution. They are, besides (in nearly all the colonies) not more than a mile or two from the institution. The penalty which usually assures good behavior on the part of any inclined to take advantage of his new privileges is the threat of return to the wards of the institution for any boy who does not conduct himself properly. Likewise any boy who, after fair trial, does not like the farm life is permitted by his own choice to return to the institution. Thus there is assured in the colony a more or less like-minded group. The boys of a particular colony are usually selected so that they may be of one type as nearly as possible.

In addition to the able-bodied boys who are sent out to do the farm work, two or three other boys not capable of working in the fields, usually crippled, are chosen to be house-boys, to assist the colony mother in preparing meals, caring for the rooms, doing chores, etc.

Some of the boys who are successfully adapting themselves to the colony life have mental ages as low as six years and thus belong definitely to the imbecile group. From this point the mental ages range to the high-grade border-line cases, the largest number of cases falling in the 8, 9, 10 and 11 year mental-age groups. As regards farm work, at least, there is apparently no definite correlation between mental age and working ability, some of the best workers having mental ages of seven and eight.

The Rome farm colonies are a direct answer to the question frequently raised as to whether the segregation program is not creating an aristocracy of the feeble-minded, housed as some of them have been in costly buildings, amidst beautiful surroundings, and waited upon by paid attendants. The question would seem scarcely a justifiable one with regard to the helpless, infirm class of the feeble-minded, many of whom need actual hospital care. Certainly a civilized society can afford to give these unfortunates the best of

treatment and surroundings. But the question is not amiss with regard to the able-bodied feeble-minded capable of a greater or less degree of self-support. In the farm colonies the boys live under average farm conditions. The farm-house is clean, tidy and comfortable; but it is plain and even rough. The house is furnished in the simplest fashion, the meals, while wholesome and plentiful, are not served in style. Dressed in their working clothes for their farm duties the boys would not look pretty in the familiar institutional drill. In one respect the colony farm-house claims superiority over some of its neighbors. Every colony farm-house has an inside bath room with running water. No expensive plumbing is installed but it answers the purpose. A rough tank is placed in the attic, consisting often of a series of old molasses barrels connected up, and in the basement is a hand pump which draws water from the well. The motive power which keeps the tank filled is supplied by the boys who happen to need this minor form of discipline. The boys are not permitted to forget their institutional training as to regularity of bathing. One of the boys sent out to work for a farmer some distance away from the colony walked many miles back a day or two after to get his bath. The farmer had no tub. In all other respects, however, the life at the farm colonies does not place the boys above the living conditions on the most modest farm.

The boys work on the farm eight to nine hours a day. Their work is directed immediately by the man who, with his wife, is in charge of the colony. This colony supervisor with his squad of boys in turn works under the general direction of the head farmer of the institution so that the activities on all the farms are coordinated. The boys have their evenings, Saturday afternoons (except when there is urgent work) and Sundays to themselves. They find their own amusements in group activities and friendships. Baseball is usually the order of the day for Saturday afternoon in summer. They go to the institution for band concerts, "movies," dances and entertainments. What they earn now and then by helping out a neighboring farmer for a few hours or a day or two they are allowed under advisement to use as spending money. They often have enough to buy clothes for themselves. Then there are such incidentals as candy, tobacco, fishing tackle, etc. No boy is allowed under any condition to buy, have or use smoking tobacco because of the fire risk. If a boy has the tobacco habit he may be allowed to chew.

How do the boys themselves like this life with all its hard work and simple pleasures? The writer can answer from personal observation of practically all the Roman farm colonies. Look into the faces of the colony boys and then into the faces of the boys in the institution and the answer stands out plain to see. The institutional boy although he has the best of care and really "likes the place" has not uncommonly a somewhat indifferent, listless air about him and perhaps something of a hang-dog expression. The typical colony boy holds his head up. He has his business as well as you. With few exceptions he is the picture of contentment. He impresses you as having found the life for which he is supremely fitted. He takes pride in his toil, his callous hands. And the spirit of the whole colony is one of happiness and congeniality. The writer has happened in of an evening at different farm colonies after the day's work is done. A small cluster of boys is playing on the lawn; several others are rocking back and forth on the porch reading papers from home. One boy sits on the kitchen steps transplanting geraniums for the "lady," the colony mother, and tells you quite in detail how to "slip" the plants. Another boy playing with a kitten, noticing that you are watching the animal's antics, draws up and tells you proudly in his stammering, halting voice: "A-a-aat's m-m-my c-c-aat." An animated circle of boys soon draws about you ready to tell you anything about the farm and the crops. They are at home and their appearance tells you on their behalf that the life here is to their liking.

From the disciplinary standpoint the boys give less trouble in the farm colonies than in the institution. In the institution they feel more or less confined; their interests are not closely directed to anything; there is a surplus amount of animal activity that has not been used; there is greater likelihood of friction with fellow-patients or attendants. In the farm colonies the boys like the life to begin with; they have an absorbing interest in many things; they have plenty of hard, steady work and no time to pick quarrels or get into mischief; and they feel free. At night they are tired and after a little recreation are ready for a sound night's sleep.

It is an interesting fact that there is a smaller proportion of escapes among the colony boys than among those in the institution proper. These "runaways" among the boys seldom have untoward consequences. It must be borne in mind that the boys run away



usually with a motive for which they cannot be severely condemned, namely to find a job and make their own way in the world. Having had the benefit of institutional training and not having been of the socially dangerous type to begin with (those with serious delinquent tendencies not being placed in the colonies) these boys do not go out to prey upon society. And they are not likely to commit sex offences because feeble-minded boys are very rarely sexually aggressive.

As before indicated, the colony is not a blind alley but rather a proving ground. It is an important stage in the process of salvaging human materials. It not only aids in further reconditioning those materials but it also tests them out to determine their fitness to become once more a part of the social fabric.

At a time when many students of social problems were strongly urging the permanent segregation of the feeble-minded as a menace to society, the Rome institution was already beginning to develop a parole system whereby boys and girls who seemed to have sufficiently profited by their institutional training were permitted to return to the community on trial, under the supervision of responsible relatives or friends. By Chapter 448 of the Laws of 1912, the State Charities Law relating to the Rome State School for Mental Defectives was amended to give the Superintendent authority in his discretion to grant a parole or leave of absence to any inmate of the institution.

The parole system furnished another and further means of testing the ability and the worthiness of the feeble-minded for life outside the institution. The institution itself is the first selective agency. Certain cases it finds need long-continued or permanent care within its walls. Other cases it finds after a more or less extensive period of training are capable of the fuller and freer life of the colony. The colony again selects. Certain cases are capable of this degree of self-support and worthy of this degree of freedom and no more. These cases may stay in the colony indefinitely. Others, after a period of colony life of six months or more prove themselves by conduct and industry, ready for the next step in social rehabilitation, a trial in the community under supervision, in other words on parole. This is at first for four weeks on trial. The parole may be extended to a year or more. An inmate is not permitted to remain indefinitely on parole. Either he shows himself fit to be discharged

or he is returned to the colony or the institution. If when the inmate completes the parole period he has shown himself successful in meeting the "world test," as Dr. Bernstein calls it, he may be discharged. The discharge is not intended to be granted however, until the authorities of the institution have assured themselves that some capable person, relative, guardian or friend will look after the boy or girl and give needed counsel, encouragement, and supervision.

To come back to the boys in the farm colonies. Many of them while in the colony go out from time to time for brief intervals to assist neighboring farmers. This paves the way for parole. The length of residence in a colony before a boy is ready for parole varies. It depends entirely upon the boy. The boys who are steady, reliable, and good workers, upon reaching the age of sixteen to eighteen, are as a rule allowed to try this further venture in freedom. The boy goes now with all his personal belongings to make his home with the farmer the year 'round. The farmer who takes him signs an agreement with the Superintendent of the institution to the following effect:

"I hereby agree to take (John Smith) to live with and work for me, with the understanding that after he has been with me four weeks, I will decide whether or not he proves satisfactory.

"I agree to pay him \$. . . per month with board and lodging.

"I also agree to report at least once in three months on how the boy is getting along, and make complete settlement for his services quarterly, on the first day of January, April, July, and October.

"I will take receipts for all clothing bought for the boy and keep close account of the spending money I give him, which is not to exceed 50c. per week or \$1.00 at any time, if he is going to town, and the balance due him at the end of each quarter will be left at the School for the boy.

(Signed) Name . . . . .  
Address . . . . .

"I hereby consent to the above agreement

(Signed) . . . . .  
(Name of inmate)

#### NOTICE

"Boys going out on parole are not allowed to smoke. If they have chewed tobacco before going out, they will be allowed to chew, but *under no circumstances*, will they be allowed to smoke."

The wages paid the boy vary with his ability. They range from \$12 to \$25 per month plus board and room. As noted in the form of agreement, the wages are not paid directly to the boy but to the institution where they are deposited in a savings fund to his credit. The farmer deducts from the wages whatever it has been necessary to spend for the boy's clothing and other needs, and the small amounts which have been allowed the boy for spending money.

As a result of their colony training most of the boys adapt themselves readily to the farm life and work. The living conditions at the colony as we have seen have not been idealized. They have with a purpose been made to conform to those of the average farm. The boy has not been "spoiled" by ease and luxury. He is hardened to labor and he is ready to accept the accommodations ordinarily accorded to the hired man. An endeavor is made, however, to have the farmer appreciate the boy and his special difficulties and limitations. He is asked to treat him more or less as a member of the family; to show him kindness and consideration without coddling him. He is not asked to take the boy out of sympathy or with a feeling of giving charity. He takes the boy on his merits as a worker and for value received. That being assumed, the farmer is made to feel that the boy needs counsel, and understanding and kindly supervision and that he cannot treat the boy therefore exactly as he would the hired man. If the farmer does not live up to the spirit of this arrangement, the boy is removed from his employ.

To one making himself acquainted with this phase of the work for the first time, it is surprising how well the relation between the farmer and his family on the one hand and the boy on the other works out. From the farmer's point of view, he is in the first place glad to get the help. If he is lucky enough to get a hired man at all he probably pays what seems to him an excessively high wage for poor or indifferent help. The independent attitude of the farm hand annoys him. The farmer does not know what minute the man may leave and perhaps with a crop in the field that must be brought in immediately. As to the boy from the Rome School, he realizes his limitations to begin with. He does not expect him to plan out the work and go ahead with it under his own direction. He realizes that he will now and then make mistakes and he allows for that. But in practically all cases he knows he can count on having a steady worker from morning to night, day in and day out, month after

month. If the boy is treated right and made to like the place he can usually be depended upon to stick. And he will work willingly and hard. The fact that the boy works best under direction suits the farmer very well. He can do the bossing and the planning so long as he has in the boy the dependable brawn that will push the work through, perhaps not rapidly, but surely. The farmer knows too that when the typical feeble-minded boy has learned to do the chores and other duties he will do them as regularly as the sun rises and sets. And so in the field. He may be slow in learning but when he has learned he will not readily forget or do the thing in the wrong way. One can find many farmers to say that this is the ideal kind of help. Does it perhaps suggest that some of the national problem of finding help on the farm has been due to the fact that we have locked up our natural farm hands in institutions?

As to the supervision of the boy, does that weigh heavily upon the farmer? Is that a drawback? So far as my personal observations have gone and careful inquiry has shown, it is not. The average feeble-minded boy of the "good" type with his typical, trusting, affectionate nature, his childlike need of direction and advice, is likely to appeal strongly to the paternal instinct of the farmer, even more, perhaps, to the maternal instinct of the farmer's wife. They soon come in many instances to take a great interest in him and his welfare. They do many "extra little things" for him. They often plan trips to town and short excursions that mean much in the boy's life. He becomes a regular member of the household. These statements are not idyllic dreamings of what might be. They are based on actual, and unexpected visits to the boys on the farms; conversations with the farmer and his family; with the boy, himself; and with the neighbors round about who "pretty much know" what is going on over at the other place. And thus again, as with the colonies, what seems on the face of it simply a good, economic proposition becomes something very much more than that. The profit the boy derives from this experience on the farm is not limited to the savings fund which represents his accumulated earnings. Nor is it limited to the valuable training he receives in industry and in farming in particular, important as all this is. The greatest gain to the boy is the chance for him who has probably come from anything but a home, a place of degradation, of filth and of discord, to enter into a normal family life, to become a member of the house-

hold, to have a personal interest taken in him and even affection bestowed upon him, to sense the spirit of the home and have it become deeply impressed upon him. Such an experience can do vastly more than anything else in the whole program of training to fit the boy to become a worthy member of society.

Starting out from the Rome institution one morning to visit colonies at Hamilton and Oriskany Falls, some twenty miles distant, the writer with the special parole agent for the boys, visited the boys who happened to be working for farmers along the roads traversed. Entirely unselected instances as they were, the interviews with the boys and the farmers were indicative of the situation generally. At the first place we found the boy, a youth about 18 with a mental age of 9, turning to and helping the "Mrs." with the washing. The farmer was away. The woman said he was a willing helper. He ordinarily worked on the farm but assisted with the heavy work about the house too. We asked permission to speak with the boy alone. We talked to him confidentially and he apparently was entirely frank with us. "Would you like to go on a better farm?" we asked, a question which usually draws out from a boy any sign of discontentment or dissatisfaction with his present place. The boy spoke in a very clear and straightforward manner. He couldn't think of leaving here now. It was a small farm and some day he might like to go on a bigger one. "But you see the man isn't very well and he couldn't get along without me right now. I do most of the work running the farm. He just tells me what to do. No, I've got to run this place. I wouldn't want to leave." Asked what he did for a good time, the boy said: "Oh, I like it here. We get to bed early and up early in the morning and there is plenty of work. They treat me fine and I don't get lonesome." The boy's good sense and his feeling of loyalty and responsibility to the farm and the farmer were to the writer at the time quite unexpected findings.

At the next place, we found the boy working for a family that conducted a country boarding place in a little cross-roads hamlet. When they had taken the boy, these people had been on a farm but had within a few months opened the boarding house. The boy here was 24 years old with a mental age of 8. He was of the backward, reticent type, and had some speech difficulty. The boy had some outside chores such as caring for the chickens and working in the

garden. Most of the time, however, he helped the "lady" with the housework. The woman spoke highly of the boy; said she liked him and that they had in every way tried to make him feel that he was a member of the family. He was a "good" boy, could work well, and was entirely trustworthy. Since they moved in from the farm, however, she had been having considerable difficulty from time to time to get the boy to stick to the housework, and occasionally he had refused to mind. She had just had a little argument with him that morning about doing some work in the kitchen. The boy was present during this conversation and when asked to speak he slowly gave us his side of it. He hated housework; didn't like to fool around with things in the kitchen. He wished he was back on the farm. He liked "the heaviest kind of work" but not housework. He was willing to stay here as long as the "Doctor" (the Superintendent, Dr. Bernstein) thought he ought to, but he would like to be on a farm. He said there was "too much just standing around" about his present job. The woman verified this feeling on the part of the boy. She said he disappeared early one afternoon and when he did not return by the time of the evening meal, they started a search. They discovered him on a nearby farm, having his meal with the "help." The boy had gone out for an afternoon's good time and had accordingly volunteered his services in helping to pitch hay all the afternoon. The boy's desire for more hard work was duly reported to the institution so that he might be given an opportunity for full self-expression on a farm.

At the next stop we saw the farmer but not the boy. The farmer explained that the boy in question had been with him three years. He was greatly pleased with his work and he had been a big help on the place. The boy needed direction but once told what to do, he went ahead and did it. He stuck to business and was steady and reliable. One morning recently the boy did not appear for breakfast at the regular time and it was found that he had quietly left with all his belongings. There had been no difficulty with the farmer. In fact the farmer said he was not altogether surprised. The boy had intimated more than once that he thought he ought to get out and make his own way in the world. And the farmer, although he was not a party to the boy's running away, said he did not blame him a bit. He wished the boy every success and he believed, with the excellent qualities he had shown on the farm, he would find it.

In such a case as this the institution would make every endeavor to locate the boy but if it found him well employed, in a good living place, and surrounded by proper influences, would not force him to go back but would either continue his parole in the new place or discharge him and let him try it on his own. Even if discharged, however, the institution would endeavor to keep in touch with him and his friends to see that all went well.

One other farm was visited. Here the farmer and the boy were interviewed separately. The farmer said the boy had proved himself entirely satisfactory in every respect but one. He lied habitually. The boy had been here two years and apparently the farmer took a great interest in him. The lying did not seem to interfere with the boy's usefulness and the farmer's concern about it was from the standpoint of the boy himself. The boy came in from the fields to see us. We spoke to him about his biggest fault. The boy said he realized the lying was a bad thing and that he wanted to get over it. He said he knew he would have to make good here before he could be sent home and that he was trying hard to learn how to tell the truth. He did not want to go to any other farm he said, but wanted to stay right here until he had done so well that the "Doctor" would be willing to send him home. He said his brother was running a farm on Long Island and he wanted to go to work for him.

At this last farm, we happened to meet the family physician on his rounds and stopped to chat with him. A physician modern in training and bearing, driving an up-to-the-minute motor car, his practice is that of the country doctor and covers most of the farming section through which we had passed. Many of the families he visited had employed boys from Rome year after year. What impression did he get, we asked, of these boys and the whole parole plan? The doctor replied that so far as he could ascertain the system worked out unusually well. He had found in most places the best of feeling between the farmer, the farmer's family and the boy. The boys themselves had done very well. They were a great help on the farms and he found the farmers glad to get their services. The boys had also conducted themselves in splendid fashion and he had heard of no serious difficulty on the behavior side. He believed it was a plan that should be further continued and extended. It was evident that he spoke not only from a knowledge of the work but from a keen interest in it, and that his observation therefore had been as close as his opinion was frank.

The farm colonies have been given the fullest consideration here because they represent much the larger part of the colony work for boys. There have been successfully operated, however, colonies of other types. A group of twenty-five boys was sent out to the region of Indian Lake in the Adirondacks to do reforestation work for the State Conservation Commission. The boys were in charge of two attendants from the institution and a representative of the Conservation Commission. They lived in tents placed in a clearing. In a month's time the boys had set out 150,000 trees. The Commission reported that the work had been better done than it ever had been by paid or convict labor. The work was worth approximately \$1,000 to the State. The direct cost to the institution for railroad fares, supplies, etc., was only \$400. The favorable results led to the establishment of a year-round reforestation colony on 150 acres of open farm land in the same locality. Here twenty boys lived during the entire year. In planting season, spring and fall, they were joined by other boys from the institution. It was shown that fifty or sixty boys could do the house and farm work and plant 500,000 trees a year in addition to caring for the nurseries. Besides, the boys produced all the vegetables, milk, butter, beef, pork, mutton, eggs, etc., required for their own maintenance and had a surplus which they sold. War conditions caused the discontinuance of this colony in 1918. Its results were satisfactory from every standpoint and it proved of particular benefit to the boys. Some of the boys who had gone out from the colony from time to time to assist neighboring farmers in their work, were left in that region on parole with these farmers.<sup>1</sup>

Another reforestation colony was opened in 1918 on a 1,350-acre farm, the Lawrence. This colony is listed in Table No. 3, of farm colonies. One hundred and fifty acres are devoted to agriculture; the rest is devoted entirely to reforestation work. This colony houses 36 boys. It is located two miles west of Rome. As noted previously, the colony contributed largely toward its own maintenance in 1921.

A venture of a still different kind with the boys was tried in 1917 with the opening of the Kossuth colony in the city of Rome. The house first occupied by this colony accommodated twenty boys. In 1919 a large corner dwelling on one of the main streets of Rome was rented, providing accommodation for thirty boys. The boys

<sup>1</sup> Bernstein *Colony and Extra-Institutional Care* p. 4.



of this colony are employed at various kinds of odd jobs about town, helping in stores, running elevators, serving as janitors, assisting painters, repairing bicycles, delivering goods, caring for lawns and furnaces, shoveling snow, etc.

The following table shows the total earnings of the boys in the Kossuth Colony, together with rental and maintenance costs for the last three years.

TABLE 4 ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS AND EARNINGS OF KOSSUTH COLONY

Fiscal year ending	Rental	No of beds	Salaries	Maintenance costs	Earnings
June 30, 1920 . .	\$ 700	21	\$1,000	\$4,614 01	\$ 5,120 28
June 30, 1921 . .	900	32	1,200	8,765.22	11,609 02
June 30, 1922 .	1,200.	42	1,568	5,638.00	9,779 45

At the present time the boys of this colony earn on the average \$1.50 a day, or by the hour, 25c. Some of the better workers earn \$2.50 a day.

The establishment of colonies in town where boys might be employed at miscellaneous jobs is principally in recognition of the temperament and aptitudes of certain boys who find this type of work more congenial than work on the farm. Experience at the Kossuth Colony has shown that satisfactory supervision can be maintained over the boys in a town colony as well as in a farm colony. The boys of the Kossuth group are on the average of about the same mentality as those on farms. The distribution of the mental ages of the boys in this colony in June, 1922, was as follows:

TABLE 5 MENTAL AGES OF KOSSUTH COLONY MEMBERS, JUNE, 1922

Mental Age	Number
5 plus . . . . .	1
6 " . . . . .	3
7 " . . . . .	5
8 " . . . . .	4
9 " . . . . .	4
10 " . . . . .	1
11 " . . . . .	2
12 " . . . . .	1
14 " . . . . .	1
Total . . . . .	22
Median Mental Age . . . . .	8 yrs. plus
Modal Mental Age . . . . .	7 yrs plus

The Kossuth Colony boys are on the whole older in chronological ages than those in the farm colonies. They represent, at the same time, for the most part, more difficult problems from the behavior standpoint, many of the boys being of the fitful, quarrelsome, violent-tempered types in need of rather strict discipline. Not a few of those found in the Kossuth Colony at the time of the writer's visit in June, 1922, had been in reformatories and in their case histories were records of more than one escape or attempted escapes since commitment to the Rome institution. In spite of these propensities of its members, affairs at the Kossuth Colony have run smoothly. The boys have responded to the challenge of the chance that has been given them "to make good" and many of these difficult types are now cooperating willingly as members of the group toward the success of the colony. These satisfactory adjustments of formerly difficult types are not always made with ease. It is a process of shifting and sifting. The boy who attempts to betray confidence reposed in him by placing him in the colony is speedily returned to the institution for a period of discipline to be given another chance only when he shows good evidence of an inclination to cooperate toward his own success. The careful supervision of those in charge of the colony insures that only those boys are retained there whom it is safe to allow in the community. As a result, the colony has been received favorably by the townspeople and the services of the boys have been constantly in demand as shown by the table of earnings. As workers, the boys have proved their ability in the miscellaneous "handy men" employments which they seek. The Kossuth Colony, like the farm colonies, has graduated into the community (that is, has paroled and discharged) a number of boys who have become good, steady wage-earners, and respectable, law-abiding citizens.

The Rome colonies for boys, by their constant record of successful operation since 1906, have more than justified the colony plan of care for this class of inmates. From the standpoint of the public, the colony system for boys has proved itself safe, practical and economical. From the standpoint of the individual, the plan has proved itself constructive in restoring to usefulness and happiness many boys of good potentialities, although limited in intellect, who otherwise would have worn out their lives as institutional automata. The colonies, without added expense to the State, have greatly en-

larged the capacity of the institution for service by permitting it to receive for training a larger number of inmates. Most important of all, perhaps, the colonies have been the means of restoring to society much dependable man-power that should otherwise have been wasted.

## CHAPTER IX

### ROME COLONIES FOR GIRLS

From the colony for boys to the colony for girls seemed to many a long and a hazardous step. As already noted the colony plan for boys has met with quite general favor. No serious objection has been raised to it. The suggestion of establishing colonies for girls, however, following the success of the boys' colony experiments, was received with many misgivings. These misgivings are not hard to understand when we recall the familiar picture of the feeble-minded girl, an easy prey to men, a menace to morality, and a liability from the eugenic standpoint. The Rome State School was the first and until recently the only institution in this country to develop colonies for girls and women. The Rome experiments have therefore been watched with keen interest and have been the subject of much discussion.

The first colony for girls was opened in 1914, eight years after the first colony for boys. It was located in the city of Rome, two miles from the institution in a rented dwelling. It was of the domestic service type. The following announcement was sent out to prospective employers:

"Rome, N. Y., October 7, 1914.

A working girls' home has been established at 209 West Thomas Street—telephone number 172-J—where girls are available for domestic work, sewing, etc., by the day, week, or month. The girls going out from this place to work are capable of doing all kinds of domestic work, except special cooking. They are only able to do common cooking.

Their services may be secured by telephone. The rate is fifty cents per day, and their services will be available for employment at any time on short notice.

Settlement for services will be paid direct to the manager of the home. Bills will be regularly rendered weekly for such services.

These girls are not markedly defective but are girls who have been orphans or have never known a normal home, and when later in life they have gone out into the world, they have been unable to get along because of lack of proper home training and normal worldly experience. As a result they were sent to this asylum for study, care and training, and we are sending them out to work after having been thoroughly trained and tested here, to see if they

can get in touch with the world under normal conditions, and thus learn to be self-sustaining and possibly have their entire freedom.

The colony is carried on in a rented house in the city which constitutes the girls' home and social center, presided over by a house-keeper or matron, with a social visitor to inspect their working places and their street deportment, to accompany them to moving picture shows and other social diversions, and to assist them in purchasing their clothing, etc. We hope in this way to have many of these girls learn through experience, normal social reactions and family life, and thus to return the services of many of these willing competent domestic workers to society and in this way lighten the load and make State care and supervision possible for all this class of dependents who positively need such care. Incidentally, in connection therewith, we have established the most positive test possible as to the ability of some of these cases to rehabilitate or support themselves, regarding all of which we can never be positive in a considerable number of these border-line cases until such world test has been actually applied."

The above statement gives a good idea of the nature and plan of operation of this first colony. The girls selected for the colony were more or less trained workers. They had all completed a course of vocational training in the institution. This training, which is a regular part of the institutional regime, consists in placing the girls for certain periods in various departments of the institution where they are taught the duties of that department. These departments include: laundry, kitchen, serving-rooms, dining-rooms, sewing, ward work and general training in employees' quarters. All of these, it will be seen, definitely prepare a girl for household duties. Some of the girls who come to the institution already well trained in domestic work, if their attitude and disposition are satisfactory, are sent out to colony life sooner than others.

At the colony house the girls were placed under the careful supervision of a responsible woman, a matron or house mother, and they were not permitted to go out except under the supervision of a social worker. Where girls were employed by the day, they went directly to their place of employment and were required to return directly to the colony house as soon as they were dismissed. If the mistress of the house wished the girl to "live in" and work by the week or month, she was permitted under certain conditions to do so. In this case the colony served as a center for the girl where she could go occasionally at the week-end or on an afternoon off, to talk over her affairs with the house mother, to visit with the

other girls, and to attend various social affairs. Though not living at the colony she nevertheless felt herself a part of it and of the group. She was subject to the guidance of the supervisor. If she fell sick she could return there or to the institution hospital for care and treatment. When her employment ceased she returned to the colony house as to her own home to await other work.

The house itself was able to accommodate fourteen girls. As some of the girls began living at their places of employment others could be added to the colony, an extra bed or two always being available, however, for the working-out girl who might have occasion to return.

The housekeepers in the city of Rome quickly recognized in the colony girl an opportunity to solve their most vexatious problem, that of finding satisfactory domestic help. The demands for the girls' services soon became greater than the colony was able to fill. Not every offer of employment was accepted, however. No girls were allowed to work at hotels, boarding-houses, hospitals, or places where there were transients, nor were they permitted to be employed in homes where there was an older boy or an unmarried man. Every home desiring the services of a colony girl was carefully investigated in advance by the social worker. A definite form of agreement to abide by certain rules aimed at safeguarding the girl's conduct was required to be signed by the employer in all cases where girls were regularly employed for an indefinite period. A girl thus employed was placed on a parole status but still felt herself a member of the colony group and was free to return there in her time off or when her employment ceased.

During the first year 67 girls were sent to and worked out from this first colony, called the Evans Colony. At the end of the year 42 girls remained in this colony or in the places of employment in the city to which they had gone from the colony. Twenty-five girls were returned to the institution for the following reasons: nine for social offenses, including flirting, boisterous conduct on the street, or being noisy about the house (only two of the nine being for serious social offense); nine younger girls because of insufficient training; seven because of sickness or because they preferred to return to the institution where their services were worth more than they were able to earn outside.<sup>1</sup>

1. Bernstein, Charles *Colony and Extra-Institutional Care for the Feeble-minded*, *Mental Hygiene*, Vol. IV, No. 1, January, 1920, p. 8

The 42 girls who had made good in and through the colony showed by their demeanor and their increasing ability as workers how greatly they had benefited by this approach to a more normal environment and the chance to work for their living like other people. The previous histories of the large majority of these girls showed a series of social failures. Most of the girls were quick to prove that when relieved of the handicap of a bad environment, and given some incentive to decency and self-respect, they could not only go straight but could earn their way in the world besides.

During the year, the girls worked for 226 different families in the city of Rome. About half of the girls had regular places of employment while the others worked here and there by the day. At the end of the year the girls' combined earnings totalled \$3,278.91, an amount which made them entirely self-supporting. Only about a third of this amount was needed for the support of the colony, including the rent, furnishings, provisions, etc. Of the balance the girls were allowed a reasonable amount for necessary expenses such as clothing. This varied with the individual girl. In addition, every girl was given twenty-five cents a week for spending money, and fifty cents a week for a personal savings account. The remainder went into a general fund for colony operations.

At the end of this first year of colony work with girls, Dr. Bernstein wrote: "I do not hesitate to declare that the results of our year's experience amply justify us in deciding to go on with the work. Surely the general interest manifest in the experiment, as especially indicated by the many letters of inquiry, warrants the assumption that organized charity is awaiting avenues of social relief along these lines."<sup>1</sup>

A second girls' colony, also of the domestic service type, was opened in Rome in the fall of 1916. This was known as the Mason Colony and was located two blocks away from the Evans, the first girls' colony. The Mason Colony occupied a rented house with accommodations for eighteen girls. It was operated on a somewhat different principle from the first colony. It was half a working home and half a training center. Eight older girls made this their home and worked out from here as did the girls at the Evans Colony. Their house-mates, however, consisted of ten younger girls between fourteen and sixteen years of age who had completed their schooling at the institution and were sent here for practical training in

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9

house-work until they should become old enough and efficient enough to be employed. It was felt that the younger and older groups in the same house would have a good influence upon each other, the older girls taking a motherly interest in the younger ones and desiring to set them a good example; the younger ones naturally aspiring to be like their older sisters in working ability, in the wherewithal to buy nice clothes, and in the larger degree of freedom which they enjoyed. One special feature of the Mason Colony was its night school. Here the girls might continue their education in reading, writing, and the ordinary school subjects. They could also join special classes in cooking and sewing. The night school was very well attended. The girls took a great degree of interest in it. Many of the girls who were living at their places of employment, voluntarily took their free evenings to come and attend this school.<sup>1</sup>

War conditions played their part in suggesting a new industrial outlet for the girls, especially those who did not take kindly to housework. The textile factories were hard pressed with government orders. Help was scarce. Dr. Bernstein believed that some of his girls could be of aid in meeting this war emergency, and he found the Utica Knitting Mills so anxious to get help that the company purchased a house practically adjoining its plant at Oriskany Falls which it rented to the institution at a moderate rate for colony purposes. This colony was opened in 1917. Twenty-four girls were placed in it and all but three or four who were retained to help in the house, went to work in the mill. The fact that this colony is still in operation proves the usefulness of the colony girls as workers, not only under war conditions but in the more normal times which followed. A closer view of the industrial colony will be taken presently.

In the first three years of colony work with girls, 200 girls had been sent to the colonies. Only thirty-five of these failed to adjust themselves satisfactorily to the extra-institutional life and had to be returned to the institution. One hundred and sixty-five of the 200 were still out at work and largely or entirely earning their living at the end of this period. Not only had these 165 girls who remained out "proved worthy of their hire" but on the conduct side they were showing that they were amenable to social standards. Those whose

<sup>1</sup> Rome State School for Mental Defectives, Rome, N. Y., 27th Annual Report, 1916, pp. 27-30



behavior did not so measure up were among those returned to the institution. On the other hand it is not to be assumed that all of the 35 girls who were returned to the institution were sent there because of misbehavior. Some were simply incapable workers; others in a poor physical condition needed the institutional care; still others because they had become so completely institutionalized that they could not be happy in the colony or on parole. Only three of the 35 had to be sent back to the institution because of serious social error. The following table summarizes the first three years of colony operations for women:

TABLE 6. STATUS OF 200 GIRLS SENT TO COLONIES, AFTER THREE-YEAR PERIOD, 1914-1917<sup>2</sup>

Girls paroled from colonies . . .	77 (63 later discharged)
Girls returned to institution .. .	35
Girls remaining in colonies .....	88
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Total girls sent to colonies .. .	200

Colony expansion has continued along the lines above indicated until now (July 1, 1922) fourteen colonies for girls are in active operation. Not all of these are primarily of the wage-earning type. Two of them, the Hamill and Mason colonies, are devoted to the training of younger girls. The former takes girls from about ten to fourteen years of age where they are given school and vocational training. From here at the age of 13 or 14 they are transferred either to the vocational department of the institution or to the Mason Colony for further occupational training before being transferred to a working colony at sixteen.

The list in the order of their establishment showing location, number of beds, rental cost and type is as follows:

TABLE 7.—ROME COLONIES FOR GIRLS ESTABLISHED PRIOR TO JULY 1, 1922

No	Girls' Colonies	Opened	Kind of Colony	No of beds		Cost
1	Evans (Closed 1919)	1914	Domestic	14	Rented	\$420
2.	Mason	1916	"	18	"	600
3.	Staten Island (Closed 1918) <sup>c</sup>	1917	"	10	"	480
4.	Parry	1917	"	18	"	480
5.	Oriskany Falls	1917	Mill	24	"	480
6.	East Aurora No. 1 (Closed 1921)	1918	Domestic	20	"	480
7.	Syracuse	1918	"	60	"	1,200
8.	Robinson	1918	"	18	"	600
9.	Richfield Springs	1919	Mill	40	"	720
10.	Hamilton	1919	Domestic	24	"	720
11.	Isaac Hopper Home	1919	"	20	Donated	
12.	East Aurora No. 2 (Closed 1921)	1920	"	20	Rented	900
13.	Lake	1921	"	20	Purchased	2,100
14.	East Aurora No. 3	1921	"	60	Rented	1,600
15.	Clayville	1921	Mill	32	"	720
16.	Hamill	1922	Domestic	24	"	800
17.	Frankfort	1922	"	40	"	800
18.	Gloversville	1922	"	32	"	800

The financial statement of the girls' colonies for the year July 1, 1918, to July 1, 1919, was as follows:

TABLE 8 FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF GIRLS' COLONIES 1918-19

Colony	Earnings	Paid Girls from Earnings	OPERATING EXPENSES Paid by Earnings	Paid by State
Rome Group .....	\$ 7,300.70	\$ 4,198.35	\$ 3,293.94	\$ 5,118.45
Oriskany Falls ....	9,154.23	3,832.41	5,276.39	94.84
East Aurora . . .	4,337.16	1,155.14	2,695.81	672.86
Syracuse .....	3,311.87	980.56	2,338.44	2,493.23
	<u>\$24,103.96</u>	<u>\$10,166.46</u>	<u>\$13,604.58</u>	<u>\$ 8,379.48</u>
Salaries . . . .				3,620.53
				<u>\$12,000.00</u>

In this year, 1918-19, the average number of girls in colonies was 140 and the average earnings of the 140 were \$165 for the year. In the same year the cost to the State for the operation of the girls' colonies was \$85 per capita (supplies \$60 and salaries \$25); in comparison the per capita cost of maintenance alone in the institution was \$280, making an annual per capita saving of \$195 on

every colony girl, or in this year, \$27,300. In addition, without any cost to the State whatsoever, inasmuch as the girls' earnings always more than covered the rent of the colony houses, 140 beds were released at the institution for new cases. To have undertaken new construction at the institution to provide that number of additional beds would have cost in round numbers a minimum of \$140,000.

The most recent financial statement of the girls' colonies, that for 1921-22 which is given in the table below, shows a record of earnings more than twice as large as in 1918-19. This merely reflects the increase in the number of colonies and in the number of girls so employed. It is significant, however, that the percentage of the total operating expenses, including salaries, paid from the girls' earnings remains about the same as in the previous year, or approximately 55 per cent. Thus the economic advantages of the girls' colonies are obvious.

TABLE 9 FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF GIRLS' COLONIES 1921-22

Colony	Earnings	Paid Girls from Earnings	OPERATING EXPENSES Paid from Earnings	Paid by State
Rome Group . . . .	\$ 9,382.46	\$ 5,311 60	\$ 3,621.20	\$ 3,932.02
Oriskany Falls . . . .	4,224.70	1,478.18	2,917 75	680 79
Syracuse . . . . .	8,128 70	2,509.28	5,737.84	2,636 26
East Aurora . . . . .	10,057.74	3,709.96	7,087.17	687.02
Richfield Springs ..	12,919.73	4,816.92	5,246 44	1,315.03
Hamilton ....	3,219.14	1,175.03	2,486.70	1,239 28
Clayville . . . . .	6,822 56	2,898.41	2,581.41	3,006 94
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$54,755 03	\$21,899 38	\$29,708.51	\$13,547.34
Salaries . . . . .				10,318 20
				<hr/>
				\$23,865 54

In proceeding to evaluate the Rome colony work with girls from the vastly more important aspects of the welfare of the individual and of society, it must constantly be borne in mind that one is dealing with comparative values. The fact cannot be pointed out too frequently that the segregation program on the old basis of indefinite institutional care for the large proportion of mental defectives was going forward at a snail's pace. Despite the many and various alarms sounded, legislative appropriations for new construction were being doled out on a meagre scale. At the same time the estimated number of mental defectives in the community

was growing by leaps and bounds. The repeated warnings of the menace of the feeble-minded were striking home among poor-law officers, social agencies, and others concerned in community problems with the result that the demands upon the institutions for the admission of urgent cases became unprecedented. Waiting lists grew so long that some of the institutions like Rome gave up trying to keep them. Constantly was it brought to the attention of the institution authorities that because of their failure to admit a certain case, this, that and the other dire social consequence had ensued. But construction, sufficient to make any tangible headway did not follow. What were the institution authorities to do in a situation like this?

At Rome the colony plan was developed by Dr. Bernstein with the approval of the Board of Managers of the institution, frankly as an experiment with the primary object of releasing beds in the institution for the many needy cases seeking, and thereto, denied admission. Considerably more than one-third of all the female patients on the books of the institution are at the present time in colonies.<sup>1</sup> In striking a balance, therefore, in terms of social values, between the gains and losses of the colony work with girls, there must always be included in the reckoning the solid gain of admitting to the institution for training a similar number of urgent cases who would otherwise have continued to be sore spots in the community life.

It is of interest first of all to note the distribution of intelligence among the colony girls as indicated by the following tabulation of their mental ages:

TABLE 10 MENTAL AGES OF GIRLS IN COLONIES JANUARY 1, 1921

	14+	13+	12+	11+	10+	9+	8+	7+	6+	5+	Not Tested	Total
East Aurora.....	1	1	2	9	7	8	13	11	.	..	7	59
Hamilton .. . . .	..	..	3	5	1	1	5	5	..		2	22
Mason .....	..	1	1	2	2	6	3	1	1	.	..	17
Parry .. . . .	..	.	5	2	6	5	2	2	1	..	1	24
Richfield Springs	.	.	.	7	9	4	5	1	1	..	2	29
Robinson . . . .	.	.	..	4	5	1	5	2	1	1	.	19
Syracuse ... . .	..		3	2	7	10	4	6	2	..	.	34
Oriskany Falls	1	.	1	1	..	2	.	.	2	1	3	11
All colonies..	2	2	15	32	37	37	37	28	8	2	15	215

<sup>1</sup> Nov 1, 1922: Total female population, 930; girls in colonies, 334.

Of the 200 colony girls tested, 162 or 81 per cent were clearly in the moron class while 28 or 14 per cent more having a mental age of 7 plus were imbeciles of such high grade as nearly to approach the moron classification. Only ten or 5 per cent of those tested had a mental age of below seven years. It is a question as to how many of these girls might be adjudged "definitely feeble-minded," particularly as to the 19 having mental ages over 12 years.

One measure of the social value of the colony plan is the economic utility of the colony girls as workers. Concrete evidence on this point has already been given in the fact that out of their earnings, the girls in the colonies clothed themselves, provided their own spending money, put money in the bank to their personal credit at the rate of about fifty cents per week per girl and in addition contributed more than half to the operating expenses of the colony house. As pointed out in the case of the boys, if colony operations had been limited to one hundred or one hundred and fifty of the more able girls, or if the best trained girls had been retained indefinitely in the colony instead of being moved on to parole and discharge, the girls' colonies would readily have made a showing of complete self-support. This was not their purpose.

The majority of the girls to date have been employed at domestic service. The large number of girls now employed for domestic duties, and the rapidity with which new colonies have been established and have won favor in various communities are evidences enough of the fact that the girls have satisfactorily met the demands of their employers. Starting out at the rate of \$.50 a day, the girls' services now command \$1.50 a day. The success of the colony girls is shown especially in the length of time many girls have been employed in the same household and in the reliance which their employers place in them. The following cases are illustrative (written as of March 26, 1923):

1. Mary C. (mental age 8 years) went to East Aurora Colony August 17, 1918. Went to work for Mrs. J. where she remained for two years and was most satisfactory. Sometimes Mrs. J. would go away for a day or two and at these times Mary would return to the colony to sleep but went every day to open the house, look after the fires, and see that everything was satisfactory. Owing to a change in the family it was necessary to return Mary to the colony.

She was then placed in the home of Mrs. P. where she is still working.

2. Another colony girl is also employed in the home of Mrs. P. and the work of both girls seems to be most satisfactory and there is no friction between them, as so often happens when two colony girls work in the same home.<sup>7</sup> This second girl, Elizabeth W. (mental age 12 years) has been working for Mrs. P. since July 1, 1921, and is happy in this home and has no desire to be paroled out of East Aurora, nor is she anxious about her discharge. She says that she is much better off than she would ever be anywhere else. Her employer, also, is much pleased with her work. Elizabeth has charge of the kitchen and the preparation of the meals. The employer has worked out a very systematic schedule so that each girl knows exactly what her work is and what work she is to do at a certain hour of the day.

3. Julia C. (mental age 9 years) went to Rome Colony October 27, 1914, and began to work for Mrs. G. on September 1, 1915. Julia is sleeping at the colony. She has been giving excellent satisfaction in this home and her employer would not like to part with her. Julia herself, feels that she has found her place in the world. (She sleeps at the colony as it is not convenient for her to remain at her place of work.) She is trusted both by her employer and by the colony matron. At the recent effort to secure subscriptions for her church she pledged \$50 which she has saved from her spending money. She has hoarded her money very carefully, feeling that she can look after it better than any bank.

4. Alice B. (mental age 11 years) was first connected with the Rome Colony in April, 1915. After a period of parole and a further period at the institution, she returned to the colony again and has been employed at the home of Mrs. N. since October 16, 1919. She has sometimes felt that she would like a change but always her employer persuades her otherwise. She has been so satisfactory that finally Mrs. N., upon the illness of her mother, felt that she must allow Alice to become housekeeper and nurse for the older woman and this continued for about a year. Now, upon the death of her mother, Mrs. N. has again taken Alice into her own home.

The following statements are from letters received from employers concerning colony girls working in their households:

"L. is very happy here. She has become most orderly. You would have been pleased to have seen her room yesterday afternoon. We have found L. most trustworthy, both within our home and out of doors. She is most reliable and we like her very much." (Employed here for nearly a year until family moved away.)

"A. has earned the respect and good will of our entire family and we have come to recognize her as one of us. Of course, she has her little faults, we all have those, but we have never found anything seriously wrong in her conduct or character since she has been with us which is about nine months. I have two little children and they just think the world and all of 'A. that lives with Grandma,' because of her kindness to them and we feel confident and safe to have them in her care—something we would not do with many girls."

"J. is doing as well as she is capable of doing. In some ways, she improves steadily. She attends Church regularly. Last week, she was asked to serve at the Baptist Church Supper and was given a 'birthday table.' So many nice things were said about her appearance, service, nice manners, and so on. She seems very happy. She is considered a marvel by those who have watched her development." (This girl has been in the same place from May 11, 1917, to date, March, 1923.)

"B. has been an excellent girl with us, very faithful in her work and giving us no cause for complaint. Under supervision she has greatly advanced in efficiency and promises to be excellent help in the future. I have been surprised to see how well she has done the plain cooking necessary. She has been very faithful in her work and a great help to us. In fact, I do not see how we could possibly get along without her,—and for us to lose her would be a great calamity" (Has been employed here since September 25, 1919.)

"I am very much pleased with E. in every way. It is very easy to see she knows how to do things. I feel very grateful for having the good fortune to get her." (Has been employed here since March 4, 1922.)

"M. has not given us the least bit of trouble and she gives every indication of being happy and contented. She is industrious, and is able to do all that I expected she would. She is very willing, and has become fond of the children, and her fondness for them is reciprocated by their confidence in her." (Has been employed in this place since March 17, 1922.)

It is of course not to be assumed that all the girls adapted themselves to the homes in which they were employed as well as the cases here cited. That fact will be brought out later in a review of the statistics of the amount of adjustment needed in adapting some

girls to life and work outside the institution. Adjustments of the type mentioned are not unusual, however, and they serve to show the possibilities of the colony plan.

We may take the colony at East Aurora as representative of the domestic service type. This colony is the farthest from the institution, being 150 miles distant. It was opened on July 1, 1918, in a rented house which accommodated a matron and 20 girls. From the very beginning the colony has been largely self-supporting. It has enjoyed excellent supervision and is indicative of what a colony can be under good leadership. So well received was this first colony that in 1920, a second colony house, accommodating 20 girls was opened. Later, in the same year the rental of a large building, formerly used as a dormitory by the Roycrofters, permitted the combining of these two colony groups in one and the addition of 20 more girls, making a colony of 60 in all.

During the fiscal year July 1, 1921, to July 1, 1922, the girls in the East Aurora colony earned a total of \$10,057. The operating expenses of the colony were \$8,699. In addition, \$1,003 was expended for furniture and equipment; \$1,208 for the girls' clothing; and \$2,068 went to the girls themselves for pin money and savings. The net operating cost to the State for this colony during the fiscal year was \$2,837 or only \$48.69 per capita.

In the fall of 1922, the writer visited East Aurora for the purpose not only of seeing the colony itself but of gaining the opinion of representative people in the community concerning it. The cashier of the largest local bank who was also the supervisor of the township, was interviewed. He is a man whose activities have brought him into close contact with the people of the community. At the same time, he has taken a close interest from the first in the affairs of the colony. Asked whether the people of the community resented the presence of such a large group of feeble-minded girls in their midst or regarded the colony inmates as a social menace to the younger people of the town, this bank official replied that on the contrary, there had been practically no criticism during the three years on any score, concerning the colony or its inmates. The residents of the town had come to have great confidence in and respect for the matron of the colony, and knew from experience that under her guidance and direction the colony girls conducted themselves in an exemplary manner. He said that the town justly



took pride in the colony and felt that it was in every sense a credit to the community. He had one of his clerks show me the considerable pile of bank books which represented the personal savings accounts of these colony girls. There were 48 individual accounts with an average of \$34.63 to the personal credit of the girls. The largest individual account was \$114.38; the lowest, \$5.

The writer interviewed also the leading real estate operator of the town. From the real estate point of view the best prospects in East Aurora are the commuters who work in Buffalo. Asked whether the presence of the colony helped or hindered in selling real estate, this operator said it was a distinct asset. There was nothing about the colony or its members to make it an undesirable neighbor, even to those who live close by; on the other hand, the fact that such competent help could be obtained at reasonable rates through the colony had served in many instances as an actual inducement to people to locate there. From a purely business standpoint, therefore, the real estate man was "for the colony."

Another leading citizen who was interviewed was the head of the Roycroft organization. He had nothing but praise for the colony. Although the colony house was built as a part of the Roycroft plant and is situated within a stone's throw of the famous Inn and the Roycroft shops, "the way in which its affairs were conducted," said this head of the Roycrofters, "made it a desirable addition to that section of the town." The wife of one of the ministers of East Aurora said that the colony girls are not noticed on the street or annoyed more often than girls from the best families.

So far as can be ascertained from careful inquiry, all of the domestic colonies stand well in their respective communities. They occupy good houses in the better residential section. There are usually close neighbors. If at first the rumor that a house is to be occupied for such a purpose causes some misgivings in the neighborhood, that feeling is quickly dispelled when the colony begins to operate and it is seen how quiet and orderly the household proves to be. The next-door neighbor of the Syracuse colony spoke highly of the quietness and orderliness of the colony girls. The neighbor of the Mason colony in Rome said that the neighbors should send their children to the colony house for the right sort of training. If the house is somewhat run-down before, it now takes on a trim and tidy appearance that would please the most fastidious,

for the girls are taught to practice their good housekeeping at home and are encouraged to make the colony house as attractive as possible. In this respect the other colonies have somewhat an advantage over the East Aurora colony since they occupy ordinary family dwellings.

While in the colony house, the girls are, of course, under the direct supervision of the matron. They do not go out alone in the evening or at any time unchaperoned except when going to and from their places of employment. The girls realize that they are on their good behavior and are particularly instructed as to the necessity of careful conduct on the street. They know that a misstep in the way of a flirtation, means being returned to the institution. In observing the colonies at first hand one is impressed strongly by the fact that many of the girls who have formerly been delinquent have become considerably sobered by their past experiences and are now extremely anxious to go right and make good. They, therefore, give one the impression that they are in the colony with the most earnest intention of proving their ability to live outside the institution. One of the prominent women of East Aurora, whom the writer interviewed, and who has employed colony girls in her home for several years, said that she felt that the difficult lives these girls had had to lead had done much to sober them and to make them the steady, reliable workers that most of them are. Without being questioned on that point, she offered the information that in all the time she had employed colony girls, she had never had anything stolen. She also said that it had been her experience that it was only necessary to use those precautions in protecting these girls that one would wish to use with one's own daughters.

Girls newly received in the colony, who have irresponsible tendencies, are carefully guarded. If such a girl is to go unescorted from the colony house to the place where she works, the colony matron advises her employer over the telephone at what time she is leaving and at what time she should arrive. The employer immediately reports to the matron if the girl does not arrive on time. In the same way the girl's return in the evening is checked up. During the day while at work the employer must keep these girls under careful supervision and is responsible for their good behavior. Girls are permitted to be employed only in those homes where the influences are right and proper supervision is maintained.

If these higher-grade mentally deficient girls are ever to be given a chance to prove their ability to get along outside the institution and to take their places in the community, the colony plan, in the writer's opinion, minimizes the chances of failure. The alternative is to parole the girl directly from the institution to the home in which she is to work. By this latter plan the girl takes a big step all at once from institutional to community life. The direction of her conduct is left almost entirely to the woman for whom she works who may or more probably may not be competent to undertake to guide the girl in making her first adjustment to her new life and greater degree of freedom. Furthermore, except for the family in which she may or may not find companionship, the girl is alone and greatly misses the companionship of the other girls in the institution. She has practically no opportunity for making friends with the girls in the neighborhood. She is not in their class. Her mistress is instructed not to let her go out unchaperoned excepting on short errands during the day. How can the girl content herself during her spare time, unless she has an employer who is particularly solicitous about her happiness and makes a special effort to keep her entertained? Such a girl naturally feels lonesome and friendless and in these circumstances it is quite understandable if she finally disregards her instructions and seeks entertainment or excitement in forbidden paths.

Linking up the parole system with the colony plan, and establishing in various communities these home centers for the girls, far from inviting trouble, greatly aids the girls in satisfactorily meeting the "world test." As Dr. Bernstein has written:

"Before we adopted the colony plan, many boys and girls who went out on parole became lonely and homesick and longed for association with friends and acquaintances; and when their work was done, rather than remain alone, they would tend to drift to the streets and associate with whomever they met there. Naturally, under these conditions, they either made undesirable acquaintances or became so homesick that they begged to be allowed to return to the institution, or actually did return of their own accord, having no friends or relatives to whom to go. This experience was one of the reasons that led us to adopt the colony plan, to help these cases gradually get back into touch with the world and learn the ways of the world and how to care for themselves, and at the same time to give them some place that they can call home while they are making their new associations and friendships, thus protecting them

from unprincipled people and bad companions during their rehabilitation period."<sup>1</sup>

For those cases which appear capable of restoration to the life of the outside world, the colony helps to fill the gap between the institution and parole. The colony is, so to speak, the sheltering arm of the institution, extended into the community. It is much easier for a girl to make good as a member of a group than to "go it" entirely alone. The girls serve as an incentive one to the other. If a girl is on parole from the colony, (that is, living out with a family), she can go to the colony house to find friendship; she can go there to her particular chums or the colony mother for comfort if she becomes discouraged. She has a strong motive to do well in her job and "go right" in order to win the admiration and respect of the other girls.

To the new girl who is ready for her first trial outside the institution, the colony offers an easy transition to community life. She can live there while working out by the day and thus remain under the careful supervision of the colony mother, until she has proved herself sufficiently stabilized in her new environment to be moved on to parole. Or if she is found to be too irresponsible for this larger degree of freedom because of active delinquent tendencies, the colony facilitates the discovery of this fact before serious consequences ensue.

The colony house for girls, by the actual experience of the Rome institution during an eight-year period, far from being a marked center of social infection, has been the means of extending the helpful influence of the institution to those trained inmates who are taking the first steps back into the world.

How fully the colony girls show their appreciation of the kindly treatment which they receive in the selected homes where they are employed is told by Dr. Bernstein as follows:

"Individual evidences of more than ordinary success could be cited by the score where the girl in a household has especially and repeatedly exerted herself to please and even surprise 'my lady,' as they always designate the housewife for whom they are working. A girl goes and purchases fifteen cents' worth of graham flour with her own money in order to surprise the family at breakfast with graham gems. Another tells the garbage man not to pound the can to loosen the frozen garbage, as she will get the teakettle of hot

1 Bernstein, Charles. *Colony and Extra-Institutional Care*, p 20

water to pour on the outside of the can to loosen it. Another asks the housewife if she can sit at her feet on the floor childlike and help her mend during the afternoon, rather than go out to the colony. Numbers asked to be allowed to take samples of their cakes and pastry to the superintendent, for him to sample and see how well they did it."<sup>1</sup>

In the above discussion reference has been made chiefly to the domestic service type of colony. The industrial or mill colonies deserve special consideration. Of the fourteen colonies for girls, now in operation, three of these are of the industrial type: Oriskany Falls, Richfield Springs, and Clayville, named in the order of their establishment. All three of these colonies are quite similar. At Oriskany Falls, the colony occupies a large dwelling of splendid construction, adjoining the knitting mill where the girls work. The house is owned by the mill company and is rented to the institution for \$40 a month. It accommodates 24 girls. Both the Richfield Springs and Clayville colony houses are owned by the companies and rented to the institution. Both are within a stone's throw of the respective mills where the girls are employed.

It was but a logical development of the colony plan that it should be extended to other types of employment than household work. Many girls not suited by temperament to domestic service have taken readily to mill work. The mill colony has the advantage also of enabling closer supervision of its members, so that many girls who could not safely work out from the domestic colony could be placed successfully in the mill colony. In fact, as will be seen shortly, the attempt to put the institutionally trained girl "on her feet" economically and socially, did not end if she failed to do well the first time she was tried in a colony. Miss Inez F. Stebbins, Social Investigator of the Rome State School who has immediate supervision of the colony and parole work with girls, states in the 1921 report of that institution, "Some girls are returned to the institution and sent to the colonies a number of times during the year. We do not consider the number of returns as an indication of failure, either on the part of the girl or on the part of the colony, but a legitimate part of the girl's training, for very often she learns more in this process of being sent to the colony, returned for discipline or with the knowledge that she is not meeting the requirements,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13

and then being sent out to the colony again, than she ever would perhaps from continued instruction in the institution."

To one who studies at first hand the work at Rome, it is this patient and repeated effort, this strong faith in the possibilities of the girl after failure upon failure, which fully expresses the spirit of the work. At first thought it may appear that giving the mentally defective girl another chance after she has failed twice or three times, represents too much risk. It must be kept in mind that "failure" does not in the majority of instances represent a serious offense from the social standpoint.

The industrial colony has proved to be the making of many a girl who has failed in the domestic colony. In the industrial colony, the girls not only live in a group, but work in a group. Under supervision they can go to work in a group and return in a group. Their amusements can be planned in the same way. The girls who need it, therefore, can have strict supervision in the mill colony. It happens that many, though by no means all of the mill colony girls, have been of the trouble-making type. "What is the use" it may be asked, "of colonizing girls who are bound to fall into difficulties as soon as supervision is relaxed?" To that question the answer, aside from the matter of economic saving to the State, lies in the still virgin field of personality adjustment. Empirically, however, it has been demonstrated in the colony work, that once a girl successfully falls into the colony regime, she is likely to become stabilized by it. Give a troublesome girl of this type good home training such as the colony offers, kindly oversight, companionship with her peers, close supervision to keep temptation away; put her at a job that demands her steady attention eight hours a day; let her begin to feel her productive potentialities by a record of good, steady weekly earnings; have her open a personal savings account and buy some nice clothes with her own earned money; see that she sticks faithfully at it for six months, a year or two years, and an entirely changed girl is likely to result. From such a regime faithfully followed, self-esteem and the desire for the esteem of others are apt to replace former motives. Such results have not been infrequent occurrences with the delinquent girls who have been sent to the mill colonies. The personality of many has seemed to be completely transformed. Girls who have formerly been great problems have come to be trustworthy, hard-working and dependable. With so

many of these girls nothing succeeds like success and the secret of making a socially acceptable person of a socially unacceptable one, often lies in trying the girl time and again until she finds the colony in which she seems to be able to adapt herself and can remain long enough to make good and to have inculcated into her the habits of life which the colony teaches.

A number of former problem girls who are successfully adjusting themselves to the life and work of the industrial colonies may be found in any one of the three mentioned. At Clayville, at the time of the writer's visit to the institution last summer, there was Elsie C. This 16-year-old girl with a mental age of 11, had been a chronic delinquent. While in the training school for girls at Hudson, before being committed to Rome, she had run away several times and had had various escapades with men. After she had been in the institution at Rome for some time, she was given a trial in the Syracuse domestic colony. While there she ran away from the home at which she was employed, taking some of her employer's clothing. After a period of further discipline and training in the institution, she was sent to the industrial colony at Clayville. The environment here has seemed to call out the best in the girl and to eliminate the worst. She has become a steady worker and at last report, her earnings on piece work were averaging \$9 a week. Elsie's behavior is now excellent. She is happy in the colony life. Those who have been working most closely with her say that her social prognosis is good and believe that she can eventually be paroled and discharged with entire safety to the community.

Another interesting case in the Clayville colony is Ethel C., a high-grade girl of 12 years mental age, 16 years actual age. Ethel comes from a notoriously defective stock of the Juke type in one of the rural counties of New York State. She had a bad record of sex delinquency before coming to the institution. In the Clayville colony she has given no trouble whatever and has worked consistently. Her weekly earnings on piece work during May averaged \$6.70. Ethel's counsellors are confident that if, after further training in the colony, she can be paroled to a new environment far enough away from her own home, she would become a desirable and useful member of society.<sup>1</sup>

A somewhat older girl in the Clayville group is June F., 20 years

<sup>1</sup> Now paroled and doing well

chronologically, 11 years mentally. June is another of the delinquent girls committed from the Hudson Training School to Rome. Upon her admission to Rome she seemed really worthless. After a time in the institution, she was tried in the Syracuse domestic colony but was returned because of her bad deportment in three days. Later she was sent to one of the domestic colonies in the city of Rome, but was soon back in the institution. After a further period of training, of considerable duration, she was given a last chance in the mill colony at Clayville. She readily adapted herself to the environment here and has done exceptionally well from the start. Her employers praise her work highly. Instead of being on piece work like the other girls, she receives a regular weekly wage of \$10.35. She is doing what is called in the mill "carry work"; that is, she carries bundles to and from the workers. This requires a steady reliable worker who can use some initiative. Her conduct is exemplary. She was allowed during the summer to go home on a vacation of two weeks, conducted herself well while there, and returned promptly to the colony of her own accord when her leave was up. She is now apparently developing those qualities of industry, stability and trustworthiness which will be a part of her personality for the rest of her life, and which will subsequently warrant her return to the community.

May H., a 19-year-old girl of 11-year mentality, had been committed to Rome from the Reformatory at Albion, with a long record of sexual offenses and a medical report of syphilis. While in the institution she needed constant watching and could not be trusted. At the Clayville Colony she has made a very good record. She has presented no behavior problems and is a steady worker. Her weekly earnings in May averaged \$8.16. It is doubtful whether May can be entrusted to live outside the colony, at least for some years to come, but her case is typical of many others who, though difficult to control in the institution, are happy, well-behaved and self-supporting in the colonies. Here May and her kind can remain indefinitely at small cost to the State, leading happy and useful lives and yet carefully guarded from further misdoing.

A similar and even more striking case of this same type among the girls at Clayville is that of Irene B., who is chronologically 29 years old and has a mental age of only 9 years. Irene also had been guilty of many sexual misdemeanors before coming to Rome. Her



name appeared first in the first list of girls sent out to open the very first colony, the Evans Domestic Colony in Rome. After she had worked in Rome a short time she ran away and, not being apprehended, was discharged. She was later arrested for vagrancy and sent to the reformatory at Albion. She was finally paroled from Albion, fell sick while on parole, and asked to be returned to the Rome State School for care, a good word for the institution from which she had once run away. After her return from Albion she went again to the Rome Colony from which she was returned after a short time, offense, smoking. Later she was given a trial in the East Aurora Colony. She made good in the colony here and was then paroled to work for a private family. The life in this household did not suit her. She ran away to Rochester and found a job there for herself, but her delinquent tendencies again got her into difficulty and she was returned to the Rome School. In October of 1921 she was sent to the Clayville Colony. Here she has seemed to be content and her behavior has been above reproach. She is quiet and orderly. During the month of May she had the second best record of earnings of all the girls in the Clayville group, a weekly average of \$13.62. She has in the savings bank a personal credit of \$33.65.

In all the description of "cases," it is a natural thing to write up the striking ones full of many vicissitudes because they furnish colorful material for the pen. These problem cases, though they represent one important aspect of the work which the colonies are doing, must, nevertheless, not be regarded as typical. Running down over the list of the girls at the Clayville colony during the month of May, it is surprising, even in this colony which specializes in receiving delinquent girls, to find how uneventful most of their case histories are. There is practically nothing of special interest to write about the records of these girls. They are of a mental age below normal. They may or may not have been delinquent before coming to the institution. Their delinquencies, however, have not been of the adventurous kind, but rather of the type into which the girl has fallen through lack of intelligence, poor environment, and inability to safeguard herself. In the institution these girls have adapted themselves to the life about them in a matter-of-fact way. When sent to the colony they do as they are told, are quiet and orderly. They work steadily and hard, if not always efficiently. In

other words, they are prosaic individuals of the dull, plodding kind, and yet they are typical of the rank and file of the feeble-minded. They have been rather sinned against than sinning. Their presence in the institution is due simply to the fact that they were unfortunate enough to be born and brought up in an unwholesome environment. Given decent surroundings, they reflect these better conditions as much as they reflected formerly the bad conditions which surrounded them. In other words, they are the safe kind who can be depended upon not to give trouble if trouble is not put in their way.

The following table gives the mental ages, actual ages, and monthly earnings of the girls in the Clayville group:

TABLE 11 CHRONOLOGICAL AGES, MENTAL AGES, AND MONTHLY EARNINGS OF GIRLS IN CLAYVILLE COLONY, MAY, 1922

Name	Age	Mental Age	Earnings (4 weeks)
A . . . . .	19	5-10	House Girl
B . . . . .	21	6-4	\$24.72
C . . . . .	22	6-8	26.14
D . . . . .	14	7-2	23.62
E . . . . .	29	7-3	24.19
F . . . . .	28	8-0	39.74
G . . . . .	16	8-2	19.21
H . . . . .	19	8-2	22.11
I . . . . .	28	8-4	23.78
J . . . . .	26	8-6	House Girl
K . . . . .	18	8-6	27.07
L . . . . .	19	8-7	33.37
M . . . . .	29	8-9	54.49
N . . . . .	19	9-1	34.29
O . . . . .	26	9-2	30.04
P . . . . .	20	9-3	28.26
Q . . . . .	17	9-4	27.12
R . . . . .	24	9-4	31.48
S . . . . .	29	9-6	26.10
T . . . . .	20	9-7	21.60
U . . . . .	22	9-8	House Girl
V . . . . .	25	10-0	39.13
W . . . . .	20	10-4	33.09
X . . . . .	17	10-5	35.92
Y . . . . .	19	10-5	33.93
Z . . . . .	26	10-8	27.20
AA . . . . .	20	10-11	41.37
BB . . . . .	19	10-11	32.66

Name	Age	Mental Age	Earnings (4 weeks)
CC .....	19	11-0	30.83
DD .....	19	11-1	56.12
EE .....	24	11-6	26.92
FF ... ..	17	11-8	26.79
GG ... ..	20	12-0	17.80
HH . . .	20	13-0	42.80
II ..... I <sup>2</sup>	21	13-5	29.24
JJ . . . .	18	13-9	29.89
Total earnings (33 girls) for four weeks . . . . .			\$1,021.02
Median chronological age . . . . .			20
Average chronological age . . . . .			21
Median mental age . . . . .			9-5
Average mental age . . . . .			9-7
Median wage ....			\$29.24
Average wage . . . . .			30.94

At Oriskany Falls, the original mill colony, at the time of the writer's visit there, the work in the mill was very slack and many hands had been laid off. Only four working girls remained in the colony, the others having been transferred temporarily to the institution or to other colonies to await the resumption of mill activities. The colony house was occupied principally by a group of younger girls from 7 to 12 who were enjoying the change from institutional life during the summer.

The mill where the girls were employed was visited, however, and the assistant superintendent who had immediate charge of the section in which the colony girls worked, was interviewed. This assistant superintendent was familiar with the work which the colony girls had done from their first employment in this mill in 1917, and he was glad to answer questions about them. We suggested that of course the colony girls had been the first to be laid off when work became slack. No, he told us, the fact was, many others had been let go before any of the colony girls were given notice. Among the comparatively few workers who had been retained, four were colony girls. He showed us these girls at their work. They could certainly not have been picked out without his assistance. Three were inspecting the finished garments, one was running a sewing machine. Naturally, we said, the colony girls only did the simpler kinds of work. No, he replied, while the majority did in-

specting, various colony girls had successfully performed every operation in this part of the mill. The colony girl who was working on the sewing machine was one of his best operators, he said. Comparing the run of colony girls with normal girls, and judging by the piecework earnings, quality of work, etc., how efficient we asked, were the colony girls. At least 75 per cent efficient on the average, he said, and more so in many cases. We intimated that naturally he had to make some allowances for the colony girls, that because of temperament, indisposition, misconduct, or what not, they were more likely to be irregular in their attendance, late in arrival, needing time off, etc. Our other questions had brought a slight smile from this quite reticent man; this brought a very broad smile and a less laconic answer than usual. That idea was all wrong, he said. You could set the time clock by the colony girls. They were there on the dot and they stuck until the whistle blew. They could be depended upon much more than the girls from town. During the working hours, moreover, the colony girls had their minds on their work and did not indulge in as much gossip and day-dreaming as some of their normal sisters. Would the mill want the full quota of colony girls back as soon as orders permitted full operation? Among the first, was his answer.

This was the opinion of a mill man whose prime interest was very apparently in production. It may, therefore, be taken as an impartial, economic opinion of the girls' usefulness and characteristics. Without doubt, considerable credit for the faithful attendance and close application to work of the colony girls is due to the colony regime and discipline. Without doubt, credit also goes to those well-known traits of the "good" type of the feeble-minded, loyalty, faithfulness and perseverance.

In the industrial colony, the girls compete on an even footing with regular labor; that is, they do the same kind of work, have the same hours, work side by side with regular workers, and receive the same piecework rate of pay. If the feeble-minded girl is as proficient as the normal girl working beside her, she receives the same amount in her pay envelope at the end of the week.

The records of the girls sent to colonies during the two years, July 1, 1919, to July 1, 1920, and July 1, 1920-21, give an indication of how the girls coming from the institution adjust themselves to this new life. During the year July 1, 1919, to July 1, 1920, a

total of 112 new girls were sent to colonies. Their status at the end of the year was as follows:

TABLE 12 STATUS AS OF JULY 1, 1920, OF NEW GIRLS SENT TO COLONIES DURING THE PRECEDING YEAR<sup>1</sup>

Remaining in colonies or on parole . . . . .	78
Returned to institution . . . . .	27
Transferred to other institutions . . . . .	2
Discharged . . . . .	2
Escaped . . . . .	2
Dead . . . . .	1
	<hr/>
	112

Thus the 78 girls, or 70 per cent of the above group who remained in colonies or on parole at the end of the year, may be said to have made good in their new environment. In addition, there were good reports on the two discharged girls: one was living at home with her people and adjusting herself satisfactorily; the other was married and maintaining a good home. Of the two girls who escaped, one was later found and committed to Letchworth Village; the whereabouts of the other are still unknown.

For the return of the 27 failures to the institution, the following reasons are given:

Lack of ability . . . . .	6
Change of place . . . . .	4
Health . . . . .	7
Difficult, needing further institutional training . . . . .	5
Petty thieving . . . . .	2
Inclined to run away . . . . .	2
Pregnant . . . . .	1
	<hr/>
Total returned . . . . .	27

Of the entire group of 112 new girls sent to colonies during this year, there were known or probable serious social consequences in only three instances: the one listed in the above table as pregnant; the girl who escaped, whereabouts unknown; and one of the two girls listed as "inclined to run away" who was found to be pregnant upon being returned to the institution.

In the year July 1, 1920, to July 1, 1921, 99 new girls were sent to colonies. Their status at the end of the year was as follows:

1. Rome State School, 26th Annual Report, 1920.

TABLE 13 STATUS AS OF JULY<sup>1</sup>, 1921, OF NEW GIRLS SENT TO COLONIES DURING THE PRECEDING YEAR<sup>1</sup>

Remaining in colonies . . . . .	52
Paroled home or working . . . . .	15
Returned to institution . . . . .	25
Discharged . . . . .	5
Escaped . . . . .	2
	<hr/>
	99

In this year the 67 girls who had definitely made good, that is, who at the end of the year remained in the colony or were on parole represented 68 per cent of the group, or about the same proportion as in 1919-1920. Besides, there have been satisfactory reports on three of the five discharged girls. Of the other two, one was later committed to another institution for the feeble-minded and the other disappeared entirely. Of the two who escaped, one was later found leading an immoral life and was sent to the Bedford Reformatory; the other was never located. The reasons for the return of the 25 cases to the institution during 1920-21 are as follows:

Lack of ability . . . . .	9
Change of place . . . . .	1
Health . . . . .	6
Difficult, needing further institutional training . . . . .	7
Discontented . . . . .	1
Escaped . . . . .	1
	<hr/>
Total returned . . . . .	25

Thus in this year there was known or probable immorality in four instances among the 99: the discharged girl whose whereabouts were unknown; the two girls who escaped from colonies; and the escaped girl noted above who was later returned to the Rome institution.

The above tables showing at the end of the year the status of the girls sent for the first time to colonies during that year do not, of course, present an entirely complete picture of the situation. For example, a girl might be returned to the institution for discipline at some time during the year and be back in the colony at the end of the year. The figures showing the changes among the new girls *during* the year are needed to supplement those already given. Of

1. Rome State School, 27th Annual Report, 1921, p. 30.

the 99 girls, 29 were not returned to the institution for any reason during the year. The remaining 70<sup>4</sup> were returned once or more for the following reasons:<sup>1</sup>

To do special work in the institution .....	2
Change of place . . . . .	7
Paroled home .....	6
Lack of room due to fire .....	4
Interview .....	1
Health .....	20
Incompetent and in need of training .....	12
Difficult—returned for discipline .....	32
Discontented—not adjusted, ....	7
Bad influence .....	2
Immoral .....	1
Stealing .....	3
Escaped .....	6
<hr/>	
Total returns ....	103
Repetitions .....	33
<hr/>	
Total girls returned once or more ....	70

It should be noted that the 32 instances listed under "Difficult—returned for discipline" were not those of moral failure, or anti-social conduct. This phrase was used to describe those whose personality or disposition was such as to prevent them from living on harmonious terms with the other members of the colony and those not willing to recognize the rights of the group above their own rights. The category, "Discontented—not adjusted," also represented the failure of the girl in a somewhat different way to function as a member of the group. The last four listings: "Bad influence"; "Immoral"; "Stealing", "Escaped," represent the type of failure which we have been wont to expect in the feeble-minded and to fear from the standpoint of society. There are in all twelve instances of returns for these four reasons—twelve of 103, or less than 12 per cent of the total number of returns.

The following table shows how many girls were returned to the institution during the year for discipline of any sort:

1. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

TABLE 14 RETURNS FOR DISCIPLINE AMONG NEW GIRLS SENT TO COLONIES  
JULY 1, 1920, TO JULY 1, 1921<sup>1</sup>

Returned for discipline once . . . . .	18
Returned for discipline twice . . . . .	5
Returned for discipline three times . . . . .	1
	<hr/> 24

Thus only 25 per cent of the girls sent to colonies during the year were returned for discipline of any kind. And most of this 25 per cent were returned for discipline not involving moral misconduct.

Thus far we have been considering only the new admissions during the year. A complete estimate of the records of the girls in colonies cannot, of course, be obtained merely from a study of the new girls who are received each year. The records of the girls who have remained over from a previous year must also be taken into account. It is, therefore, of value to consider the conduct of all the girls in colonies during a particular year. The latest figures available are those of the fiscal year, July 1, 1920, to July 1, 1921. At the beginning of this year there was a total of 187 girls in colonies; at the end of the year there were 200. During the year there were 254 admissions to the colonies, representing, however, a smaller number of girls than that because some were sent to colonies more than once. Of these 254 admissions, 5 were children sent to the colonies for care by the older girls; 38 were girls who had been tried in colonies in previous years, returned to the institution, and were now being sent out again for another trial; 99 were girls sent to colonies for the first time; and there were 112 repetitions representing the girls who were transferred to colonies more than once during the year. Of these 112 repetitions, 40 girls were returned twice; 8 were returned three times; and two were returned four times.

Of the 329 individual girls in colonies at any time during this year, 153 were returned a total of 192 times to the institution as follows:<sup>1</sup>

121 girls returned once . . . . .	121
26 girls returned twice . . . . .	52
5 girls returned three times . . . . .	15
1 girl returned four times . . . . .	4
<hr/> 153 girls	<hr/>
Total returns . . . . .	192

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31



The reasons for these returns were<sup>1</sup> as follows:

Difficult in colony and in need of further discipline . . .	56
Health . . . . .	33
Incompetent—in need of further training . . . . .	28
Change of place . . . . .	22
Fire at Richfield Springs with consequent lack of room . .	10
Unsettled and dissatisfied in Colony . . . . .	8
Mill at Oriskany Falls closed temporarily . . . . .	6
To be paroled . . . . .	6
Attempted or temporary escape . . . . .	6
Stealing . . . . .	5
Bad influence morally . . . . .	3
To do special work in the Institution . . . . .	2
Unfounded charges and investigation . . . . .	2
Flirting . . . . .	2
Immoral . . . . .	2
To appear in Court . . . . .	1

192

The most frequent cause for return, with 56 instances, was, "Difficult in colony and in need of further discipline" which, as has been shown, did not involve moral misconduct. The only serious or potentially serious instances of delinquency among the returns were five escapes which resulted in immorality; the three instances of girls who were a bad influence morally; the five instances of stealing; the two cases of outright immorality; and the two instances of flirting—a total of seventeen more or less serious occurrences. Seventeen delinquencies would seem to be a small enough proportion (5 per cent) among the 329 girls who were in the colonies at one time or another during the year.

In addition to the six escapes listed in the above table of returns to the institution, there were in this same year six other girls who ran away from the colonies and were not returned to the institution. Of these,

- 4 never located or any information secured.
- 1 traced for a short time—then lost
- 1 found married and discharged.

In five of these six cases there was, of course, a considerable probability of social mishap.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p. 23

Shortcomings in behavior on the part of some are to be expected even among a like number of average normal girls living together in similar groups. Scrutiny<sup>1</sup> of these instances of failure among the colony girls is unable to give one the impression that the colony plan is inherently unsafe either individually or socially considered. The large number of girls who receive, in the colony, training of life-long value in industry, discipline, self-control and self-guidance far outweighs the relatively small number of those who drift into misconduct. Judged from a social standpoint, very few, even of these instances of misconduct, may be considered of a serious character. Two facts must always be borne in mind in making an estimate of the colony plan: (1) Under the most careful institutional supervision girls run away not infrequently and fall into similar difficulties—in fact, the institutional atmosphere is more likely to incite a girl to this course; (2) From a broad social viewpoint, the colony, by releasing beds in the institution, makes possible care and training for many socially dangerous girls and women whom otherwise the institution would be unable to receive.\*

In addition to the girls who continued successfully in the colony to the end of the year (1920-21) 32 others during the year were advanced one step in the process of rehabilitation to a parole status. Of this number, 17\* were paroled home for an indefinite period. Fifteen of these continued successfully at home to the end of the year and longer; 1 was regarded as no longer in need of supervision and therefore discharged; another, who married while on parole, was found to be doing well and was discharged. Eleven of the 32 were given a working parole, of whom 9 continued successfully to the end of the year and longer, one was returned to the colony, and one, who broke her parole and escaped, was, upon being located at home, discharged to the custody of her relatives. The remaining four of the 32 were paroled home for brief and definite periods. All of these returned to the colony promptly at the expiration of their time with the exception of one who broke her parole, married, and was later discharged.<sup>1</sup>

Reviewing the colony work for girls as a whole, we find that from the time of the establishment of the first colony in 1914, a total of 573 girls had been admitted to the colonies from the institution as follows:—

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24

TABLE 15 NUMBER OF GIRLS RECEIVED IN COLONIES TO JULY 1, 1921

Received before July 1, 1919 .. . . .	362
Received during year 7-1-19 to 7-1-20 .....	112
Received during year 7-1-20 to 7-1-21 .....	99
Total girls received in colonies .. . . .	573

On July 1, 1920, 319 of the 474 girls who had been received in colonies up to that date, still remained under the supervision of the institution while 155 had been discharged. The records of the 155 discharged girls will be considered presently. At this point we shall examine the status of the 319 girls remaining under supervision on July 1, 1920. Of this latter number, 215 were girls who had been sent to colonies prior to July 1, 1919, and 104 were girls who had been sent to colonies during the year, July 1, 1919, to July 1, 1920.

The status as of July 1, 1920, of these 319 girls was as follows:<sup>1</sup>

TABLE 16 STATUS AS OF JULY 1, 1920, OF COLONY GIRLS REMAINING UNDER SUPERVISION ON THAT DATE

Paroled home .. . . .	18
Paroled, working .. . . .	16
At Isaac Hopper Home .. . . .	15
Returned to institution .. . . .	88
Escaped, but not discharged .. . . .	2
Remaining in colonies .. . . .	180
	319

Taking the same group of 319 girls, one year later, that is, as of July 1, 1921, we find the following:<sup>1</sup>

TABLE 17 STATUS AS OF JULY 1, 1921, OF COLONY GIRLS REMAINING UNDER SUPERVISION ON JULY 1, 1920

Remaining under supervision:		
Paroled home .. . . .	52	
Paroled, working .. . . .	21	
At Isaac Hopper Home . . . . .	6	
In institution .. . . .	86	
Escaped, not discharged .. . . .	1	
In colonies .. . . .	117	283

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

Discharged:	
Dead .....	3
Home .....	8
Married .....	10
Working .....	2
Sent to other institutions .....	4
Escaped .....	9
Total .....	36
	319

It is of interest to note why 86 of these girls who had been given a chance in the colonies among those sent out prior to July 1, 1920, found themselves back in the institution on July 1, 1921. The reasons as given are as follows:<sup>1</sup>

TABLE 18 REASONS FOR RETURN TO INSTITUTION OF 86 FORMER COLONY GIRLS

Discipline for escape .....	5
Discipline for bad disposition .....	5
Discipline for stealing .....	1
Discipline for flirting .....	1
Immorality or immoral tendencies .....	12
Physical inability .....	14
Mental inability .....	6
For further training .....	37
For transfer .....	5
Total returned .....	86

Following through the above records serves to show the colony as a distinct trying-out process. It is apparent from the figures given that if a girl after a fair trial fails to adjust herself for any reason to the colony life, she is speedily returned to the institution. The records especially show the flexibility of the colony plan, a quality that seems most essential in dealing with human materials, so that the fact of one or two or three returns to the institution for failure in the colony does not deny the girl the opportunity of another trial in another colony if she seems worthy and capable of it. On the other hand, the records show that many of the girls who upon trial fell far short of measuring up to the demands of colony life, have been returned to the institution and retained for indefinite periods of further training.

The analysis shows also how the colony moves on to parole and discharge those girls whose records in the colony have indicated that they are ready for a trial in the community, first on parole,

1. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

and then, if the parole period passes favorably, to discharge. At the same time the figures impress one with the fact that the colony is not a radical scheme which rapidly and injudiciously returns girls to the community. Of the group of 319 colony girls remaining under supervision on July 1, 1920, only 20 were voluntarily discharged (home, working, married) during the succeeding year. Nine others had to be put on the discharged list because they escaped. In addition, 73 were on parole during that year but these were still on trial and subject to immediate return to the institution if they failed socially or economically. Twelve others had been returned to the institution for immorality or immoral tendencies, but these represented cases in need of further discipline and training rather than cases whose failure in the colony could be regarded as a serious menace to the community.

The most complete test of the value of the colony plan would come through a careful investigation of the records of the girls who have gone out from the colony, have been discharged and are now once more members of the community. No funds have thus far been allowed either by the State or from private sources for the employment of the necessary personnel to make such an investigation. In the absence of such special assistance, the Social Investigator of the Rome institution endeavored last year to obtain such information as was possible concerning these discharged girls.

In all, information was obtained on 113 of the total of 155 discharges, leaving only 42 unknown. It will be of interest here to review the results of this investigation.

The following table gives the status of the 155 girls discharged before July 1, 1920:<sup>1</sup>

TABLE 19. STATUS AS OF JULY 1, 1921, OF GIRLS DISCHARGED THROUGH COLONIES PRIOR TO JULY 1, 1920

Living with friends or relatives, wholly or partially self-supporting . . . . .	17
Working and self-supporting . . . . .	21
Married . . . . .	47
Dead . . . . .	14
Returned to institution . . . . .	7
Committed to other institutions . . . . .	7
Unknown . . . . .	42
Total . . . . .	155

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28

The reasons for the return of the seven girls to the institution are as follows:<sup>1</sup>

TABLE 20 REASONS FOR RETURN OF GIRLS FROM DISCHARGE

For immorality .....	3
For better supervision .....	2
From State hospital for second trial in colony .....	1
For companionship, because lonely .....	1
Total returned from discharge .....	7

An item of particular interest is the number of children born to these discharged girls, and the number of these that were legitimate and illegitimate. The following table gives these facts:<sup>1</sup>

TABLE 21 CHILDREN BORN TO DISCHARGED GIRLS

Born previous to admission to institution .....	3
Born while on parole .....	1
Born after discharge, legitimate .....	37
Born after discharge, illegitimate .....	8
Total children .....	49

Eighty-five of the 99 living discharged colony girls whose records could be traced, or 86 per cent may be said to have settled down to orderly, useful, more or less self-supporting lives. This includes the 21 girls working and self-supporting, the 17 living with friends or relatives and wholly or partially self-supporting, and the 47 wives. This is indeed a splendid record that would perhaps need to be modified somewhat if the 42 unknown cases could be traced. To many the fact that 47 or nearly half of the known living discharged girls had married will appear a startling enough fact in itself. This is a matter that involves the hereditary considerations discussed in an earlier chapter. In the cases of some of the girls who married, it is said that what appeared to be "mental defect" seemed to resolve itself largely into a matter of personality difficulty resulting from a bad early environment. The Rome study gives us no report on the type of man whom the girls married; nor does it give us the results of the observation of the 49 children of these marriages. The men are said to be of the hard-working type, of average intelligence, whose incomes are able to maintain reasonably good

1. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

homes. The girls, with few exceptions, are reported to be good, steady wives and home-makers.

The eugenics question as involving the children of these marriages is one that can be better understood in the course of the next decade or two. Here ready to hand is human material that should prove of the utmost value in throwing light upon a question that is just now in great doubt. At this point we may simply recall one or two facts: first, that by no means all cases of mental deficiency are apparently of the hereditary type and that therefore some of the children of these matings stand as good a chance of being normal as the average child; second, that Dr. Fernald's after-care study of a similar group of cases discharged from Waverley showed that most of the children of such marriages appeared normal; third, that even if the deficiency of the mother were of the hereditary type, according to the newer interpretation of the Mendelian theory suggested by Dr. Davenport, the taint would appear in a descendant only provided it chanced to mate with a deficiency of the same unit type (that is, on the hypothesis that there are many and various kinds of mental deficiencies). All of which, as noted in Chapter VI, does not mean that in the present state of our knowledge on the subject, the marriage of such of these girls as are definitely defective in intelligence, should be encouraged.\* It only means that where such marriages do occur, we cannot be sure that the results are always bad.

In the writer's opinion, it comes back to that simple but exceedingly useful distinction which has been made between the "good" and "bad" types of mental defectives. It is the inherently or chronically "bad" types, that is, the morally defective, who have caused the bulk of the social damage that we have laid at the door of the feeble-minded in general. I should conceive the first function of our institutions for the feeble-minded, limited in capacity as they are in relation to the actual extent of subnormality, to be that of selection. Among the cases which it receives, studies and observes, it will discover some who are by nature morally as well as mentally defective, who with any amount of discipline and training are constitutionally unable to change their ways. Such cases should be, and are, held for indefinite and even permanent custodial care. Others will be found who, though perhaps not morally defective, have become so thoroughly confirmed in bad social habits by the

time they have reached the institution, that it is at least a task of many years to teach them different forms of conduct. They, too, require indefinite custodial care. The point is that in the weeding out of the socially dangerous types of the feeble-minded, not only in the State Schools, but also in the prisons, reformatories and courts, there will come to be a large institutional population in itself. Aside from these "moral" defectives, the institution will have to continue to provide care for many of the low-grade feeble-minded, who though harmless, cannot be cared for outside the institution. This is another class that will need practically life-time care.

In its capacity as a selective agency, the institution, as shown by experience, will also discover a certain proportion of those who give indication of possessing personality traits that are socially acceptable and useful. For such of these individuals as prove, after a shorter or longer period of institutional training, to have adequately developed these social characteristics, the institution should have means whereby they can gradually and experimentally, subject to recall to the institution at any time, be "tried out" in community life. After observing the work at Rome, the writer is of the opinion that the system there developed, including the three successive extra-institutional stages of colony, parole, and discharge when warranted, is both practical and desirable from the standpoint of the individual and of the community. In other words, the system is good and worthy of being recommended for adoption elsewhere. Whether its net results are socially good or bad depends entirely upon the discretion used by the head of the institution and his staff in the selection of those who are ready for this community trial in its successive stages. If the institutional inmates are injudiciously transferred to colonies, if they are passed on too rapidly to parole and discharge, and if adequate supervision is not provided to the extent found necessary at these various stages, then obviously evils may befall. It is a "trying out" process that for its success needs to be carefully safeguarded all along the way. Observations of colony work to date indicate that when the colony plan is carefully administered, it is both a desirable substitute for the wards of the institution as a means of care and training for selected cases, and a safe and effective method of social rehabilitation of certain types of the feeble-minded.



## CHAPTER X

### THE PUBLIC SCHOOL AND THE BACKWARD CHILD

Waverley and Rome have been taken as examples of what the institution can do and is doing in the social reconstruction of its inmates. The institution, as we have seen, receives only a fraction of the cases of mental deficiency existing in the general population. It receives, moreover, the more difficult of these cases, those who by reason of gross defect, troublesome behavior, or unfavorable home conditions, cannot continue in community life. The institution is also frequently called upon at present to receive individuals who so far as personal conduct and social surroundings are concerned, might well remain in the community, but who are sent to the institution because there is no other place where they can receive the specialized training suited to their limited mental capacities. It is for the education of this latter class of children that the public school is coming to recognize its responsibility.

Since the first special classes for backward children were established in the public schools of Cleveland in 1878, there has been developing gradually, but very gradually, the idea that the public school is an agency charged with the task of educating all the children of the community according to their several and special capacities, and that it has as great a duty therefore to provide training for the backward or defective child in accordance with his capabilities as for the normal or exceptional child in accordance with his capabilities. The first special classes for backward children in New York State were begun in New York City in 1895, under the direction of Miss Elizabeth E. Farrell, who is now the general director of this work in the New York City schools. It was not until 1917, however, that New York State recognized the obligation of all its schools to furnish instruction of this kind. In that year there was placed on the statute books of this State the so-called Lockwood Law, (Chap. 553, Laws of 1917), which in substance directed that special classes be established in every city or union free school district where there are ten or more children, three or more years retarded. While this law is mandatory in

its wording, it has not been widely enforced and the organization of special classes, especially outside the larger cities, has moved very slowly.

In New York City there are now approximately 5,500 children enrolled in special classes. Provision should be made in the opinion of Miss Farrell for at least 20,000. In the State outside the city there are about 175 special classes, with an approximate enrollment of 2,600. Of these 175 classes, 65 are in the two cities of Buffalo and Rochester, so that it may be seen the work is not well organized in most other parts of the State.

Various studies and surveys by Terman,<sup>1</sup> Rosanoff,<sup>2</sup> Farrell<sup>3</sup> and others, indicate in general that at least 2 per cent of all children of school age are sufficiently backward or defective to require education by special class methods. This would give a total of about 35,000 children of school age, 6 to 16, in New York State, as compared with the 8,000, who are now actually enrolled in such classes. There is also the further problem as to how well equipped the existing special classes are for the work in hand. Those in the larger cities are well organized, and in the smaller communities there are some outstanding examples that compare favorably with those in the larger cities. There is in general, however, much room for improvement.

A considerable amount of material has been published from time to time by educators, psychologists and special class teachers as to the content of the teaching, the methods of instruction, and of individual treatment in these classes. That internal aspect of the work will not be dealt with in detail here. Consideration will be given rather to the place of the special class in the whole program of the rehabilitation of the mentally defective.

It needs scarcely to be said that in the training of the mentally defective child, as in the training of his normal brother and sister, the best results are accomplished when the child is put under the right kind of instruction at a very early age. The axiom that underlies all the training of the feeble-minded, so simply expressed by Dr. Walter E. Fernald, cannot be too often repeated, that it is just as difficult for the feeble-minded to unlearn as it is for them to learn

<sup>1</sup> Terman, Lewis M. *The Measurement of Intelligence* Houghton, Mifflin p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Rosanoff, Aaron J. *Survey of Mental Disorders in Nassau County, New York*. July-October, 1916. National Committee for Mental Hygiene, Inc. Publication No 9.

<sup>3</sup> Estimate of Miss Elizabeth E. Farrell of number of children requiring special class provision in New York City.

in the first place. If both learning and unlearning, then, are more difficult processes for the subnormal, than the normal, it is the more important that the subnormal child should be placed under the right kind of instruction as soon as the learning process begins. This involves first of all the pre-school years, a most important period in the child's development and perhaps doubly so with the defective child. It is in this period that mental defect usually becomes manifest. It is in this period also that many of the undesirable physical and personal habits to which defectives are prone, reveal themselves and may be most easily corrected. Here is an important field of opportunity for rendering the most effective kind of help to the subnormal child that has as yet scarcely been touched. An interesting pioneer demonstration is being made in this field by the Baby Welfare Association of Boston which has organized a habit clinic primarily for children of pre-school age, under the direction of Dr. Douglas A. Thom.<sup>1</sup>

Significant work in the same field is being done in connection with the Psycho-Clinic at Yale University under the direction of Dr. Arnold Gesell. Dr. Gesell points out that because the pre-school child legally has no educational status in this country, the importance of the first sexennium of life from the educational standpoint is apt to be overlooked. Yet, as he shows, psychologically, nothing could be more erroneous, for the amount of mental growth in these first six years is greater than in any equal number of years following. Practically all cases of mental deficiency become recognizable in this period. Because the child in these years is developing important emotional, moral, and social attitudes toward life, this period may easily if neglected, Dr. Gesell shows, become "the soil of perversion, inefficiency, and distorted or curtailed development."<sup>2</sup> The responsibility for the proper training of the child in this pre-school period naturally devolves almost entirely upon the home, with such assistance as can be rendered by social agencies interested in family and child welfare.

When the age of six is reached, the public school can begin to function in dealing with this problem. One of its primary tasks in that connection is that of identification. The demand for a complete

1. Thom, Douglas A. *Habit Clinics for Children of Pre-School Age*. Mental Hygiene, Vol. VI, No. 3, pp 463-470, July, 1922.

2. Gesell, Arnold. *The Psychological Significance of the Pre-School Period*. The Public Health Nurse, May, 1922.

census of the feeble-minded has frequently been made from time to time as a preliminary to an adequate State program for dealing with this problem. To obtain such a census at the present time of all the feeble-minded in the population of all ages has been shown to be practically impossible. Estimates of the number of such persons there have been, but anything like complete identification of defective individuals has proved to be too stupendous a task for present resources. If we lack such important information for the present generation, we can begin to get it in full detail for the rising generation, through the public school. That agency can identify for us defective individuals, whose identity can be made a matter of record for future use, if necessary, at any time throughout the life of the individual.

The identification, however, must be for some purpose, and once the defective children of a given group are known, the public school should stand ready to give those children the type of training best suited to their needs. The public school is the one agency capable of dealing with this problem in a complete way at a time when effort will be most effective. It is easy enough to set up a prescribed academic curriculum (based on the theoretic but non-existent average child) and require all children to conform to that or drop behind and repeat grades until they do. Such a system means, however, for the defective child that after the first few grades he reaches a point where he can go no further; it means shame and discouragement in being "left behind" with younger pupils; it means every incentive to truancy with its ready concomitants of delinquency and crime. It means "putting in time" and wasted years, only to drop out of school, as soon as the working age is reached, a failure and without any training with which to face the world. In many instances such a school program means, moreover, that the defective boy or girl is hustled off to the institution because he is in the way around the school and retards the progress of other pupils. In other words, the whole program is calculated to make social outcasts of the mentally defective boy or girl, to ostracize them from society. And society pays for this; either by supporting those persons for the rest of their days in an institution, or in the larger bill of crime, delinquency, pauperism, and social degeneracy of those who are left to drift.

We have seen that the institution never has been and probably

never will be large enough to receive more than a fraction of the mental defectives in the population. Nor is it desirable that mental defectives should be institutionalized if they can be taught to live industrially useful, socially acceptable lives outside the institution. The responsibility of the public school as a universal, educational agency is clear. The training of mental defectives is an educational problem as truly as that of normal children. It is only a different kind of education. By an appropriate course of instruction, the public school should stand ready to give every backward and defective child who is amenable to special class instruction (and most of them are), the kind of training needed to equip him for an independent, self-respecting citizenship. The institution should be called upon to receive only the more extreme cases who are either too low-grade or too troublesome in behavior to be capable of special class instruction and those whose home conditions are so unfavorable as to make institutional care advisable. The rank and file of those who fall below the standard of normality as determined by the intelligence tests are rightly the responsibility of the public school.

There are some of those who have come closest to these backward children in the public school work who more and more hesitate to call them subnormal or defective. True, by ordinary academic standards or by the criterion of the intelligence test, they fall short. But these workers have come to think of them as merely "differently minded" or "hand-minded." In other words, while their failure to keep up with the ordinary class work is apparent, they reveal not infrequently ability along practical and mechanical lines, and sometimes, unusual ability. It is in this direction, as is well known, that special class instruction tends. It places the emphasis on industrial and technical training. Dr. Henry H. Goddard has written: "The one thing that fits all these children, the one thing that draws out whatever is to be drawn out of them, is training of the hand,—manual training, industrial training. These things such children can do with wonderful success; in this they are interested; this they can do with great joy; it arouses in them a feeling of satisfaction at accomplishing something."<sup>1</sup>

Summarizing opinion on this point, Miss Meta I. Anderson writes: "The experts all agree apparently on the kind of work

1. Anderson, Meta I. *Education of Defectives in the Public Schools*. World Book Company p. 12

most worth-while to teach defective children, and it is on this curriculum approved by experts that the work in the classes for defectives should be based. Therefore, the following subjects should be included in the course of study for the classes for defectives: habits of personal cleanliness, sense training, manual training, physical training, vocational and industrial training, gardening, academic work; also speech training in so far as it is found to be at all worth-while."<sup>1</sup>

The theory seems to be sound. The practice is somewhat more difficult. The manual work taught in the school is apt to consist of those things that give good, general developmental training, but are not specifically useful in an occupational way after the child graduates at the working age from the special class. This is particularly true of the boys' training. They are taught such things as basket- and brush-making, chair-caning, rug-weaving, toy-making and other kinds of wood-working, which are excellent enough in themselves but are not usually wage-earning occupations at which the boy can find a job when he gets out. In other words, as we have observed from the list of occupations which the boys from the Waverley institution have found, the boy is more likely to get a job as machinist's or plumber's helper, packer, teamster, machine-tender in a spinning room and various kinds of factory work more or less skilled, painter, barber, etc. The fact that most of the boys graduating from the special classes today are compelled to find unskilled work does not necessarily indicate that many of them are not capable of doing skilled work but simply that they have not had the training for it. Those who are engaged in special class teaching are for the most part well aware of this problem of making the vocational instruction more practical but it remains a problem how to work this out in connection with school instruction.

Aside from these two problems of (1) giving all the defective children in the public school the advantage of special class instruction and (2) making this instruction more directly useful from the wage-earning standpoint, the question of most immediate interest is, how do these special class graduates turn out? There is already at hand some data which throws light on this point.

In 1914 a study was made under the direction of Miss Farrell of the records of 124 boys and girls who had been graduated from

1. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

typical special classes of New York City public schools since 1906. The study included 86 boys and 38 girls. The children had been out of school from one to six years, the average length of time being two years. The children considered in the study represented the total number discharged from these classes upon reaching the age of sixteen.

The general facts brought out by the study of the 124 cases were as follows:

Working . . . . .	54 per cent
Cared for at home (some helping) . . . . .	25 per cent
In institutions . . . . .	8.8 per cent
No information . . . . .	8.9 per cent
Dead . . . . .	2.3 per cent
Arrested . . . . .	5 per cent
	<hr/>
	104.0 per cent <sup>1</sup>

For the girls the following information was obtained:

Working . . . . .	21
Cared for at home . . . . .	13
In institution . . . . .	1
Arrested . . . . .	2
Married . . . . .	2
Having children . . . . .	1
Dead . . . . .	1
No information . . . . .	2
	<hr/>
Total . . . . .	43 <sup>1</sup>

For the boys the following information was obtained:

Working . . . . .	47
Cared for at home . . . . .	18
In institutions . . . . .	10
Arrested . . . . .	5
No information . . . . .	9
Dead . . . . .	2
Married . . . . .	..
Having children . . . . .	..
	<hr/>
Total . . . . .	91 <sup>1</sup>

Among the occupations in which the girls were found to be engaged were: millinery, making of linings, factory work, and

<sup>1</sup> Note There are some duplications in the listings.

laundry work. The boys were working at truck-driving, delivering groceries, tailoring, wood-turning, etc.<sup>1</sup>

In presenting the results of this study, Miss Farrell called special attention to the need of more field workers to undertake the work of assisting these boys and girls to adjust themselves to community life, to find suitable positions, to see that home conditions were satisfactory, to see that the boy or girl was able to find the right sort of companionship and recreation, and in general to give them supervision over a period of years until they had become stabilized in community life. The fact that this study had revealed that special class graduates had done so well with little or no follow-up supervision was simply an indication of what excellent results might be accomplished, were the proper amount and right kind of supervision available.

It is in this work of social supervision that one finds the keynote of the whole program of adjustment of the mental defective to community life. The importance of such supervision has been recognized in New York State by the organization, under the direction of the State Commission for Mental Defectives, of a corps of field agents or social workers. The work of the field agents is to keep in touch with all mental defectives in the community who need guidance and assistance in reaching a desirable level of economic efficiency and social behavior. The task of the field agent is not to interfere gratuitously in the supervision of mental defectives who are able satisfactorily to manage themselves and their affairs without such help, or for whom adequate supervision is already available through family or friends. The field agent offers her assistance only where necessary and aims to handle her cases with as light a touch as may be consistent with the desired result. While the field agents supervise mental defectives of all types and ages, their largest and most important single function has come to be in practice the supervision of defective children after they leave the public school. For the most part, even the school systems which are progressive enough to have special classes and visiting teachers, do not make provision for following up these cases after they leave school.

During the last fiscal year ended June 30, 1922, 360 new cases were referred to the four field agents of the New York State Commission for Mental Defectives, of which number 230 or 64 per cent

<sup>1</sup> Farrell, E. C. 16th Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools, N. Y. City, 1913-14, p. 28 and ff.



were referred from the special or ungraded classes of the public schools. Obviously the number of field agents allowed the Commission is totally inadequate to deal with the problem of community supervision in the State as a whole in any comprehensive way. Excellent work, however, has been done in certain limited districts; for example, one agent whose territory was Orange County, was able to follow up practically all of the urgent cases in that district as well as to supervise a number of cases in adjoining counties. In the district in which this agent worked nearly all of the identified mental defectives came under supervision. As examples of the kinds of service rendered by the field agents, the following type cases are quoted from the report of these agents for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1921. It is noted in citing these cases that very few cases conform to any one type and that no two present exactly the same problem.

*"1. Keeping Children Out of Institutions*

G A's mother came to the office to get information as to how to place him in an institution. She had been advised by his teacher to send him away. Investigation showed that the boy has no bad habits and gives no trouble. The mother, who is a janitress, was advised to keep him at home, to teach him to help her, and if possible, to find work for him. G. is now earning a little by doing odd jobs in the neighborhood, and helps his mother with the janitor work.

*"2. Improvement of Physical Condition*

An effort is made in each case to put the child in as good physical condition as possible. To this end, clinics of the neighborhood are called upon. These include clinics for sense-defects, orthopedic clinics, neurological clinics, etc

A. G., 16 years old, was badly in need of glasses, when referred to us. Her father, then out of work, and with five young children dependent upon him, was willing to take her to a clinic, but was unable to pay for glasses. The field agent directed him to a good eye clinic, and arranged for the Red Cross to pay for the glasses. The father then asked for help in finding work. He was referred to the A. I. C. P. who found a position for him. A. helps with the housework, and the care of the younger children. She is useful at home, and well supervised by her mother.

*"3. Parole Work*

The agents are doing a part of the parole work of the State Schools, at the request of the Superintendents. This includes first, investigation of the home previous to parole and recommendation

to the Superintendent as to the advisability of returning the child to the home; second, supervision during parole. Occasionally it is found, after trial, that the child cannot maintain satisfactory conduct in the home. In such cases, the field agent must see that he goes back to the institution.

F. L., 25 years old, is on parole. The parents are dead and she lives with her married sister. She helps with the housework in the morning, and in the evening works at a motion-picture theatre managed by her brother-in-law. She is always under strict supervision, is useful at home, and is earning a little money. F. is tractable, but the sister says that the knowledge that a stranger calls occasionally to inquire about her conduct, is a great help in controlling her.

#### *"4. Placing Anti-Social Cases in Institutions"*

A small proportion of cases require institutional care for their own protection and that of society. These are mostly children with delinquent tendencies.

V. S., 15 years old, of low mentality, more than once locked himself in his mother's room, and started a bonfire on the floor. He was induced with great difficulty to open the door. He was frequently in very bad company, and beginning to steal. The mother had no control over him. This boy was placed through the field agent in a State school.

#### *"5. Finding Employment"*

In this kind of work, the field agents have unfortunately been able to do very little. Because of the general unemployment during the year, and because of the small staff, it seemed best to make use of existing employment agencies, rather than to attempt placing children directly. A number of cases were referred to the State Employment Bureau, and to the Junior Vocational Guidance Bureau. A few children were placed directly.

H. S., 16 years old, mental age 7.2, I. Q. 46, was placed by the field agent in a sewing school where dressmaking and fancy sewing are taught. A high standard of work is required and the surroundings are very pleasant and healthful. The girls are paid a small sum while learning, and are advanced as they become more proficient. Though H. is earning only \$4.50 a week at present, she is very happy at her work, and her parents are glad that she can have this opportunity."

The following table shows the classification from an economic and social standpoint of 415 consecutive cases coming under the supervision of the field agents:

TABLE 22 CLASSIFICATION OF CASES UNDER SUPERVISION OF FIELD AGENTS

	Number	Per cent
Employable . . . . .	74	17
Useful at home . . . . .	44	13
Harmless . . . . .	110	27
Burdensome or troublesome . . . . .	155	39
Menace . . . . .	32	4
Total . . . . .	415	100

The small percentage of cases (4 per cent) who were regarded by the field agents as a social menace, is significant, especially in view of the fact that the more difficult cases are naturally those which come to the field agents' attention. The New York State Commission for Mental Defectives is of the opinion that "the work of the field agents on the whole is most encouraging. The Commission believes that their number should be increased."<sup>1</sup>

A comprehensive study of the careers of an unselected group of special-class graduates has recently been made in connection with the Mental Hygiene Survey of the city of Cincinnati conducted under the auspices of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene. This special study of feeble-minded ex-school children was made by Dr. V. V. Anderson of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene and Director of the Cincinnati Survey, and Miss Flora May Fearing. The work was supplementary to, and by way of bringing up to date a study of the same group made in 1918 by Helen T. Woolley and Hornell Hart.<sup>2</sup>

There were in all 201 ex-students of special classes for mentally defective children included in the study of Anderson and Fearing. "The object of this study was to determine what happens to mental defectives after they leave the public schools and go out into the community to earn a living."<sup>3</sup> Because of the inadequacy of facilities for examination at an earlier date in the Cincinnati schools, a few children got into the special classes and thus into this study who were not feeble-minded, but the group as a whole, in Dr. Anderson's opinion, could in all justice be called "defective."<sup>4</sup> All of those studied had been out of school for at least four years and many longer. The range of chronological ages was from 18 to 30, with a median age of 22 years. They had therefore been out of

<sup>1</sup> Fourth Annual Report, State Commission for Mental Defectives, 1921-1922 p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Studies from the Helen S. Trounstein Foundation Vol. 1, No. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Cincinnati Survey 1922 p. 107      <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108

school long enough for a fair test as to their ability to get along in the world.

The nativity of the group was as follows:<sup>1</sup>

TABLE 23 NATIVITY OF 201 EX-STUDENTS OF SPECIAL CLASSES

	Number	Per cent
Native-born of native parents . . . . .	161	80.1
Native-born of foreign parents . . . . .	27	13.4
Foreign-born . . . . .	2	1.0
Unknown . . . . .	5	2.5
Total . . . . .	201	100.0

Nine or 4.5 per cent of the group were negroes. The group comprised largely native American individuals who were not handicapped by language or social difficulties, resulting from foreign birth and training, in adjusting themselves to American community life.

In the final tabulation of the results of this study 24 of the original 201 cases had to be eliminated: eight who had died; six who were found not to be feeble-minded; three who were definitely diagnosed as psychotic; two who could not be located; and five on whom there was insufficient data. This left 177 individuals whose records were included in the final tabulation, of whom 113 or 63.8 per cent were men and 64 or 36.2 per cent women.

Twenty-six of the girls and 15 of the boys had been married. To the 26 married women there were 39 children born. Ten of the women had been sexually promiscuous. Five had had illicit relations with at least one man. Six were pregnant when married. Five girls who were reported in the 1918 study as having had illegitimate children were found married at the time of the later study. In the entire group in the three years that elapsed between the two studies no other cases of illegitimacy had occurred.<sup>2</sup>

The location of the 177 at the time of the study was as follows:<sup>3</sup>

TABLE 24 LOCATION OF SPECIAL CLASS GRADUATES

Location	MALES		FEMALES		TOTAL	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
In institution . . . . .	9	8.0	6	9.4	15	8.5
At home, never worked	5	4.4	21	32.8	26	14.7
At home, previous industrial record . . . . .	15	13.3	26	40.6	41	23.2
Working for relatives . . . . .	11	9.7	.	....	11	6.2
In industry . . . . .	65	57.5	11	17.2	76	42.9
Army or Navy . . . . .	8	7.1	..	....	8	4.5
Total . . . . .	113	100.0	64	100.0	177	100.0

1. *Ibid.*, p. 108

2. *Ibid.*, p. 109

Those who are in industry, in the Army or Navy, and working for relatives may be considered as gainfully employed. These include 95 of the 177, or 54 per cent. Of the men 84 of the 113, or 74 per cent were thus gainfully employed, while of the women only eleven of the 64, or 17 per cent were in gainful occupations. There were 58 per cent of the women, however, who had been in industry at some time. The great majority of the women were usefully, if not gainfully employed, in household duties.

Trustworthy information as to earnings was obtained for 69 of those engaged in industry. The median wage for this group was \$15.08. The weekly wages ranged from \$5 to \$37 a week. Approximately 50 per cent were receiving more than \$15 a week. Following is the wage distribution for these 69 cases on the basis of the last wage received at the time of making the study:<sup>1</sup>

TABLE 25. WAGES OF 69 FORMER SPECIAL CLASS STUDENTS

Weekly Wage	Number
\$ 5 to \$ 9 ....	9
\$10 to \$14 . . . .	25
\$15 to \$19 . . . .	13
\$20 to \$24 . . . .	12
\$25 and over . . . .	10
Total . . . . .	69

With regard to 72 cases, information was obtained as to the length of time the individuals remained in one position. Of these, 58.4 per cent had held the same position for more than a year; 40.3 per cent for more than two years; and 22.2 per cent for three years or more. The kinds of occupations in which the men were found engaged were: 27 working in factories, six on construction work, eight as machinists, three as salesmen, 21 at odd jobs and others as apprentices, farmers and clerks.

Of the women in industry, nine were employed in factories, one as filing clerk, and another at kitchen work.<sup>1</sup>

The fifteen of the 177 cases who were listed as being in institutions were all in institutions for the feeble-minded. The remaining 162 cases were studied especially for evidences of delinquency. The following summary is quoted from the published report as to the result of this investigation:

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p. 113.

"Only 36 individuals (22.2 per cent) have court or institutional records (correctional). This certainly does not indicate that the majority of feeble-minded children are liable to become criminals, even if not supervised. It seems as if we will have to revise our conception as to the meanness and viciousness of feeble-minded persons. It may be interesting to note that practically all of the individuals who had a delinquent record were likewise handicapped by personality difficulties and character defects. It is our belief that we need to know more about a person than the mere fact that he is feeble-minded, if we are going to make any predictions as to his conduct later on in life. This study is but in keeping with our experience from other investigations, that by far the largest factor in delinquent behavior, as far as the individual's make-up is concerned, is not to be found in his degree of intelligence but in his character and personality."<sup>1</sup>

As indicating the relation of home conditions to the problem of the mentally deficient, 136 unselected homes of the 177 children studied were visited. It was found that 32 per cent of this group of children came from homes of good middle-class type; in 27 per cent of the homes conditions were only fair; in another 27 per cent the homes were of a distinctly poor character with unfavorable surroundings; while 14 per cent lived in the very lowest grade homes. "The chief failure in the homes of these individuals was found in parental conditions. Twenty-three per cent received the very lowest possible score on this item."<sup>1</sup> This would seem to bear out the experience of the institutions for the feeble-minded where it is found in so many cases that the failure of the individual and the essential reason for his commitment has been the failure of the home. To quote further from the Cincinnati report: "One interesting thing that stood out in this investigation, was that those children handicapped by personality difficulties and serious psychopathic conditions, came almost invariably from families where there were a great number of social maladjustments; while those children free from these handicaps came from the best type of families, most industrious and socially adjusted parents, where home conditions were good."<sup>2</sup>

Do not these findings give substantiation to the indications of preceding chapters that the problem of the defective, socially viewed, has been primarily an environmental problem, and that with good

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

environment (i. e. surroundings and training) especially from an early age, the defective usually ceases to be a social problem? Seventy per cent of the 177 cases come from families which are registered with the social agencies of Cincinnati.

The final conclusions of the Cincinnati report are of particular interest here:

"This study has led us to believe that mentally defective persons may be handled with success by other than institutional measures. We have been impressed with the fact that those elements that go to make for the failure or success of mental defectives in life are in no sense different from those elements that affect the lives of normal persons. Those same elements of character and personality make-up, those same conditions in the home, and those same factors in training that speak for the successful career of a normal child, bear with equal force on the career of the feeble-minded child.

"In the light of this study we are convinced that a large proportion of feeble-minded persons can be handled economically and safely out in the community if properly trained and adequately supervised. With such training and supervision it is clear that feeble-minded individuals who would otherwise become delinquents or dependents can be expected to develop into decent, self-supporting citizens and thus save the State millions of dollars for their maintenance. The keynote to the whole program is to be found in early recognition, adequate training, proper supervision, and in the case of those who are a menace—final segregation."

Present indications are that the public school before many years will be so organized to deal with backward and defective children that it will become the largest and most important single agency devoted to the work of developing the feeble-minded for economic and social usefulness. It is far better that the backward child should not be separated from the normal life of the home and the community in order to receive the specialized training that he needs. Where the public school work for these children is well developed both from the standpoint of intra-school provision and extra-school and post-school supervision, the results as in New York and Cincinnati, indicate how well the public school can meet this problem. In the future the institution will continue to have an important function to serve but only for those lower-grade or extremely difficult cases that cannot reasonably be retained in the school and for those who must be removed from a bad home environment.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE SOCIALIZING PROCESS

The work of training the feeble-minded to take their places in community life as we have seen it developed at Waverley, Rome, and to a limited extent in the public schools, may now be reviewed in terms of socialization. The nature of this socializing process can be understood only in the light of the mental defective himself and his whole make-up.

The one important bit of information which it has been quite generally assumed is needed in order to classify and deal with the mental defective is the mental age, as determined by the intelligence test. This index of the degree of native intelligence has commonly been used as the sole criterion in judging the feeble-minded. The inference has been that there is a quite definite correlation between mental age and ability, even between mental age and behavior. As to ability, the mental age does indicate the ability of the individual to perform in an intelligence test. But does it by itself indicate the ability of the individual to hold down a job, to mix with people, in other words to get along in the world? As to behavior, we have seen that two individuals of exactly the same mental age may differ radically: one may be the most chronic type of vicious criminal; the other may be altogether reliable, industrious and well-behaved.

Placing sole reliance in the fact of mental age for the understanding of the mental defective may be compared somewhat to the classical economics which based its theories on the so-called "economic man." Just as the economic motive is one, but only one of many motives, that may actuate the individual, so the degree of native intelligence is one element but only one of many elements that go to explain the behavior of the feeble-minded.

What these other elements are is roughly indicated by Dr. Fernald's practical distinction between the "good" feeble-minded and the "bad" feeble-minded. In short it is a matter not of one characteristic or a group of characteristics, but of the whole personality make-up of the individual. Native intelligence is only one of a number



of elements that go to make up the whole personality. Within certain limitations of mental age, it is to be doubted whether it is the most important factor in the conduct of the mental defective. What is known as "good common sense" for example, is an element that does not appear to be closely correlated with mental age. It apparently varies among the feeble-minded of the same mental age, just as it does among normal people. As a matter of fact, some of the feeble-minded whom the institutions are trying to rehabilitate and who are of quite high-grade, or even border-line intelligence, fail in the community for lack of this quality, while others of lower mentality succeed because they happen to have it.

The same may be said of the innumerable other factors that enter into the personality of the mental defective which do not register in the measuring scale of native intelligence, such things as emotional stability, temperament, disposition, aptitude, teachability, sociability, etc. Psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and others who are specializing in this field are becoming increasingly aware of this problem and already several outlines of the qualities that should be considered in order to get a picture of the whole personality have been devised. Two of these will be mentioned here.

In December, 1920, Dr. S. D. Porteus, while serving as Director of the Department of Research of the Training School at Vineland, N. J., published "A Study of Personality of Defectives with a Social Ratings Scale."<sup>1</sup> In this Dr. Porteus states:

"The whole difficulty of the task of test interpretation lies in the fact that behind so-called 'mental age' stands the personality of the individual. The psychiatrist is entirely right in his emphasis on the fact that right social adjustment depends upon the whole individual make-up rather than the mentality. A writer in a recent medical journal complained that his fellow physicians treated the patient only below the eye-brows. With equal truth, it may be said, that the psychologist too often tends to observe the patient only above the eye-brows. \* \* \*

Dr. Porteus goes on to explain the basis on which he has worked out a ratings scale for the personality of mental defectives. He believes that aside from general native intelligence which the accepted mental test measures, there are other general qualities affecting social adaptation which should be determined by the personality rating scale. He points out:

1. Porteus, S. D. No. 23, *Publications of the Training School at Vineland, N. J.*

2. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

"The community into which an individual must fit is, first of all, a working community, hence one of the first things to be determined is the earning capacity. \* \* \* In the next place it is to a greater or less extent an intelligent working community, so there must be a certain modicum of learning capacity to enable the individual to profit by training and to assimilate ideas. Earning and learning capacity are then closely related to self-support. But even with the ability for self-support, the individual is not fit for the community unless he has also some capacity for self-management and self-control. In other words he must have the ability to manage himself and his affairs with ordinary prudence. This capacity for self-management depends mainly upon temperament and disposition, judgment and common sense, whilst self-control must be exhibited in the inhibition of unsocial, instinctive and impulsive action."

Dr. Porteus outlines these "factors affecting social fitness" in the following scheme<sup>2</sup>

Social Fitness	{	1 Earning Capacity	}	Self-support
		2 Learning Capacity		
		3 Temperament and Disposition	}	Self-management
		4 Judgment and Common Sense		
		5 Inhibition of Anti-social Instinct and Impulses	}	Self-control

From this general scheme, Dr. Porteus goes on and works out in detail a method for rating mentally defective individuals in accordance with the degree of their possession of the above capacities. The above outline of the many factors to be taken into consideration for the understanding of the personality of the individual indicates how incomplete our information is when we know the mental age alone.

The components of personality are enumerated in even more detail in a contribution to this question by Dr. Howard W. Potter. Dr. Potter has had an unusual opportunity to study the feeble-minded in all their aspects in his position as Clinical Director at Letchworth Village, one of the New York State institutions for mental defectives. Dr. Potter views the process of fitting the mental defective to society as a question of the successful or unsuccessful adaptation of the individual as the result of "correct or faulty habits of adjustment." He finds that "human efficiency depends upon the adjustment to three groups of factors—namely, in

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

the order of their importance, instincts, emotions, and intelligence."<sup>1</sup>

On the basis of his close study of hundreds of institutional cases, Dr Potter states: "When we come to consider the question of adaptation relative to the mental defective, we are at once impressed with the fact that those cases that are not committed to an institution until they approach maturity almost invariably are discovered to be feeble-minded as a result of an investigation into some behavior disorder. We know further that there are other defectives of the same intellectual level, who are at large in the community and able to fill a useful niche in the social and economic organization. Why is one in need of institutional care, while the other is able to live satisfactorily in the community? Plainly it is not a matter of intellectual endowment. It is, however, a matter of behavior. To understand behavior, we have to consider among other things, the personality."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Potter defines personality as "the sum of the facilities for adaptation."<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Potter dissects those qualities that go to make up personality into eleven principal components as follows: (1) intellectual characteristics; (2) sense of responsibility; (3) industrial efficiency; (4) output of nervous and muscular energy; (5) habitual reactions to inferiority; (6) sociability; (7) conduct and behavior; (8) mood; (9) reactions related to mood; (10) special aptitudes and interests; (11) unique and pathological traits.<sup>4</sup>

By defining two or more types under each of these heads and characterizing each type with a group of descriptive traits, Dr. Potter works out a guide for obtaining a general summary of the personality of any particular case. There is no numerical rating scale connected with Dr. Potter's scheme as with that of Dr. Porteus. It is developed entirely on a descriptive basis together with a grading of types. For example, traits that tend to indicate the sense of responsibility listed under (2) above, are divided into types and characterized as follows:

"Type I. Actively irresponsible, heedless, contemptuous attitude. Unconscientious, not orderly, unwilling to be helped, heedless of the rights of others, and contemptuous of the usual standards of social and economic fitness.

1 Potter, H. W. *Personality in the Mental Defective*. *Mental Hygiene* Vol VI, No 3. July, 1922. p. 487

2. *Ibid.*, p. 488.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 489.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 490.

"Type II. An undeveloped sense of responsibility. Lacking in conscientiousness and unappreciative of the rights of others. An undeveloped sense of social and economic standards. Not unwilling to be helped, but unable to help themselves in any spontaneous, consistent, constructive fashion.

"Type III. Fair sense of responsibility, conscientious, orderly, appreciative of the rights of others, and realizing the necessity of conforming to social and economic standards. Willing to be helped and ever ready to take advantage of anything in order to help and improve themselves in a constructive way."<sup>1</sup>

Such a comprehensive study of the individual make-up throws a flood of light upon the real mental defective and affords a basis for thoroughgoing effort in the direction of the development and strengthening of those traits that will be helpful to the individual socially, and their substitution for those that would interfere with social success.

How far it may be possible to change personality itself by conscious effort is a question open to much discussion. From work that has been done in the mental hygiene of childhood with children of pre-school age and of early school years, it has been shown that if the child can be reached young enough there is much that can be done at least to aid the personality to *develop* in the right direction by eliminating at the very beginning of their appearance faulty habits and reactions and by fostering right attitudes and reactions. In any event, even if the qualities that go to make up personality are regarded as innate things that cannot be changed, we do know that on the practical side it is possible to change the manifestations of personality in behavior, which is after all exactly the thing with which we are concerned. The work at Waverley and Rome shows this, likewise the work at any well-organized hospital for mental diseases or psychiatric clinic.

It is not without meaning that the work which has been carried on in the last few years in the direction of the social rehabilitation of the feeble-minded has developed apace with this newer emphasis upon the personality of the mental defective. When the mental deficiency problem was conceived of merely in terms of mental age, it did not take on a very hopeful aspect. Mental age, we were informed, is an index of general native intelligence which in every individual reaches its full and final development at a certain chron-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 493.

ological age. It is generally agreed that this is not later than sixteen years in the normal person, and in the feebleminded it is relatively earlier, depending upon the degree of mental defect. That is, if the individual when he has reached the maturity of physical development, has attained a mental age of only ten years, there his mental age will remain for the rest of his days. All the King's horses and all the King's men could not add one cubit to his intellectual stature. So in this narrow psychological sense, feeble-mindedness was a hopeless problem. The best training in the world could be applied to the defective individual but it would not increase his mental capacity an iota.

At this impasse the sociological approach to the problem began to show a way out. Granted that it was impossible further to intellectualize the mental defective, was it not still possible to socialize him? Could there not be developed by training those qualities which even with a limited intellect would enable the feebleminded person to get along in society? This is exactly the question to which the work at Waverley, Rome, and in some of the public schools has given an affirmative answer.

Obviously, as has already been noted, not all the feebleminded are capable of being thus socialized. Some are, to begin with, so low in the scale of intelligence that even good personality traits would not be able to overcome that handicap. Others appear to have innately such ingrained, unsocial personality trends that to develop their behavior into socially useful or acceptable forms is, with our present knowledge, out of the question. Still others are received for training at an age when faulty or anti-social reactions have become so confirmed that the best efforts cannot overcome them. Cases such as these need indefinite institutional care. They cannot take their places in society. Experience is showing, however, that many of the higher-grade mental defectives possess such favorable personality traits that if they can be placed under training early enough, they can later function acceptably in the social order.

It is the behavior of the mental defective with which we are primarily, one might almost say, exclusively concerned. Behavior is the product of the interaction of two things: personality and environment. The process of socializing the feebleminded, as we have seen it carried on in the preceding chapters, may be described as one so modifying or controlling the environmental stimuli in relation

to the personality as to induce on the part of that personality the desired responses in behavior. This is in a sense a trial and error process until the particular group of environmental stimuli are found which bring the sought-for result. After that it is a matter of converting the momentary, favorable response into habitual responses of the same kind until the individual becomes stabilized in that form of behavior.

What is meant by personality has already been explained. The term, environment, is here used in its broadest sense to include the entire group of external stimuli acting upon the individual as for example, family and friends, living conditions, training and education, employment, etc. Whether or not personality itself is subject to change, environment is the movable, controllable element which can be brought to bear upon personality in such a way as frequently to effect significant changes in behavior. This is the essence of the work being done in the social rehabilitation of the feeble-minded.

In many of the cases committed to the institution for the feeble-minded because of their bad conduct in the community, the faulty behavior reactions disappear soon after they are received in the institution. An investigation of the environment from which the individual comes frequently reveals conditions there that were the inciting factors in the individual's faulty behavior. In other words it was a matter of maladjustment between personality and environment. Thus the socializing process begins in many cases by the mere fact of removal to the changed environment of the institution.

The well-organized institution, as we have seen, continues this socializing process by other environmental changes. At Waverley for example each newly received case is thoroughly studied and diagnosed by a group of experts upon arrival in order to reach a full understanding of his limitations, his capacities, his physical condition, his personality make-up, and his previous experiences. This knowledge permits of mapping out a program best suited to the individual needs of the case and which has as its aim drawing out the very best that is in the individual.

This process of drawing out or education as developed by the well-organized institution is again effected by environmental changes, consciously applied by those in charge of the case. If the individual seems dull and unresponsive, some form of simple occupational work may be the thing which will arouse his interest and awaken

his formerly unresponsive self. If the individual is actively delinquent and unruly, kindly treatment and understanding as a substitute for punishment, may be the means of securing his confidence and co-operation and of gradually transferring his activities toward some useful occupation. If the individual is of the shut-in and depressed type, the dances and other forms of play and recreation which the institution provides may be the means of gradually drawing him out and making of him a sociable being. There are innumerable ways in which different types of personality may be handled in order to supplant faulty reactions with desirable ones. While not at all a haphazard process, it is, nevertheless, one of trial and error and painstaking effort until the means is found which will elicit the favorable response. Such work is constantly being done in the best organized institutions for delinquents, insane, and defectives.

The socializing process does not cease, however, with what can be done in the institution. As we have noted in the work at Rome, the objective of developing a social personality is further sought by still another change in environment from the institution to the colony. It has already been observed in the discussion of the colony work, how the limit of what the institution can do for the higher-grade cases is reached at a certain point, beyond which further detention in the institution might produce unfavorable results in personality and behavior. In other words a point of diminishing returns in the environmental stimuli of the institution is reached. The study, observation, discipline, school and vocational training here given are effective in the social education of the individual up to a certain point. Then a new group of stimuli more nearly approaching those of normal life are needed because this educational or socializing process, like any other, must be a progressive thing. This is exactly what the colony affords. Here the boy or girl (now approaching adult life, or in adult life) although still under the supervision of the institutional authorities, and still a part of a group of others from the institution, is nevertheless set down in the midst of a normal community. The environment has the advantage of being a protected one like that of the institution, but one that affords at the same time opportunity for contact with the outside world. Thus the individual can begin once more to adjust himself to the stimuli of everyday life. These stimuli come principally through

contacts made with the normal people found at the place of employment in the home, in the factory, or at the odd job. Again everything is done by the institutional authorities to see that these first influences from the environment of the outside world are favorable and of the sort calculated to elicit the desired response in behavior on the part of the colony member. To this end the kind and place of employment are selected, regulations are adopted relative to deportment on the street, attendance at amusements outside the colony house, amount of spending money and the way in which it is spent, the establishment of savings accounts, etc. By this method the individual has developed in him, on the ground floor so to speak, the habits of living and modes of conduct which will most contribute to his success when he tries it "on his own." The colony plan moreover has the advantage of continuing this close observation and supervision of the colony members until the individual gives evidence of having become sufficiently stabilized in social behavior to get along in the community. The colony is also a means of eliminating as eligible for parole and discharge those who do not seem to develop the requisite social qualities for successful community adaptation. What is the colony plan then but a scientific method worked out by careful experiment for continuing the socialization of the feeble-minded?

Parole is simply the next step in the socializing process whereby the environment of the individual is still further enlarged to include a considerable degree of the freedom of the outside world. On parole, however, there are still certain limitations which aim at continuing the favorable aspect of the environment that is, the individuals are placed only in homes and situations which have been investigated and approved; the person in whose care they are paroled is made responsible for supervising their leisure time as well as their working hours; the paroles are visited from time to time by a social worker from the institution; and the institution retains the authority to return the boy or girl immediately to the institution in case of actual or threatened social failure.

Finally, discharge with its return to the full and free environment of normal life is not intended to be granted until the socializing process has been effective to the point where the individual has become sufficiently stabilized in personality and behavior to get along without close, direct supervision. The statement is put thus because



as a matter of fact, as has been shown by Dr. Fernald and others, many of the feeble-minded even after discharge should have the benefit of a certain degree of supervision. The supervision desirable in such instances is simply the friendly, sympathetic interest of some responsible and intelligent person in the community to whom the feeble-minded boy or girl can look for example and counsel. One important reason for such continuing supervision is the fact that the boy or girl has usually come to the institution from a bad home environment, and that in giving him or her another chance it is necessary to place the boy or girl in an entirely new environment. Since they are thus without home or friends, the supervision is only such as would be deemed advisable for many young men and young women of normal mentality.

In reviewing this process of socializing the feeble-minded, one thing stands out: it resolves itself as does any process of assimilation or socialization into a matter of *rapprochement* between diverse social elements, in this case the better elements of the citizenry on the one hand, and the feeble-minded in question on the other. It is a process in which all the approach is not on the side of the feeble-minded. We have seen how the training of the feeble-minded is directed toward bringing their actions into conformity with social standards. Let us see in what ways society must adapt itself to the feeble-minded.

The feeble-minded, especially until they reach manhood and womanhood, are notably impressionable and easily influenced. That is why they so characteristically fail in a poor environment and cause little or no trouble in a good environment. In short the feeble-minded quite truly reflect in their behavior the kind of environment in which they find themselves. In that way they are an index of social conditions. If the community finds large numbers of delinquent, socially menacing feeble-minded in its midst, let it look at itself and ask: "What kind of community have we here, what kinds of neighborhoods, of homes, of recreations, etc.?" The trouble must be sought somewhere behind the feeble-minded. The feeble-minded may be perpetrators but rarely instigators. As indicated in Chapter VI and elsewhere, the feeble-minded are frequently the dupes of more clever wrong-doers of higher mentality who can cover up their own actions and leave the feeble-minded to be caught.

How commonly has the attitude of the community toward the

feeble-minded been one of social ostracism! Those who by reason of delinquency have come to public notice have been wont to be regarded as hopelessly bad characters. "Get rid of them; keep them out of our midst," was the natural social reaction. The result of this tendency on the part of society to cast off the feeble-minded was simply to foster in them those anti-social proclivities with which they have been charged. To know the feeble-minded and their impressionistic nature, is to realize what the effect upon them of such a social attitude is. This policy of ostracism, far from solving the problem of mental deficiency, only tended to aggravate it.

How can society best face this problem? By adapting itself to the feeble-minded to the extent of giving them helpful and practical training and supervision, and by making the community so far as possible safe for those who are permitted to remain in its midst. Society owes it to the feeble-minded to give them the opportunity to come under good influences. For the more difficult cases it should provide institutional care and training and the means whereby the more favorable institutional cases may be gradually restored to community life after their training is completed. For the remainder it should provide special classes in the public schools where they can receive the kind of instruction which they can best absorb and which will be useful to them socially and economically in later life. This social program should also include visiting teachers and social workers who can inquire into the home conditions of the subnormal children and make necessary adjustments, and who will also stand ready to give a helping hand when the feeble-minded boy or girl leaves the special class or institution to make his way in the world. Finally, society's duty toward the feeble-minded is not completed unless it makes available for such as need it, kindly and understanding guidance throughout life.

Will the feeble-minded repay such efforts on the part of society? There is already sufficient evidence that they will, from the facts brought out in the foregoing pages. Among so many of the feeble-minded there is an almost pitiable craving for respectability, an ardent desire to conform, to be like other people, to live, and dress, and play like them, to associate with them, to have their esteem, to be "regular folks." The feeble-minded are to a certain extent defective in intellect. They are not necessarily defective in emotions or instincts. What is this craving but a very healthy reaction to

society's former policy of ostracism? What is it but a natural expression of the gregarious instinct?

The problem of the feeble-minded may be summed up in Professor Giddings' terminology as one of social self-control, defining that phrase as he has done, as "those things which society does to or upon itself." Those of an intelligence level which is below the standard that we now regard as normal represent no insignificant proportion of the social order. Of these there are many who, by reason of favorable environment or personality or both, will get along satisfactorily without special help. Others, because of unfavorable environmental conditions and lack of adaptive powers, will not be able to make their way independently in the world. The well-organized community as a matter of social expediency will put itself in a position to know about its weaker members at as early a period in their lives as possible. It will determine what measures of social self-control may be instrumental in enabling these individuals sooner or later to become satisfactorily functioning members of the group, as a preferable alternative to having them cause a serious amount of social damage or become dependents upon the group for the rest of their lives. In other words the far-seeing community will recognize the vast social and economic advantage of making such expenditures for the special education of the feeble-minded as may be necessary in making social efficient of the largest possible number. It will make every endeavor to reclaim these border-line individuals by the process of assimilation or socialization and, if we may judge by the indications of the limited work already done, it will have a profitable measure of success.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE FEEBLEMINDED IN THE SOCIAL ORDER

In Chapter I it was indicated that as the term mental deficiency is now commonly defined, the number of mentally defective individuals in the population is so large that institutional care for more than a fraction of them is practically out of the question. In the latter chapters of this volume certain facts have been set forth suggesting that it is neither necessary nor desirable to segregate all the feebleminded, although it has been repeatedly emphasized that the discussion of the social possibilities of the feebleminded did not relate to those with inherent or irremediable moral defects nor to the lower-grade types, for both of which classes of defectives indefinite institutional care or its equivalent is unquestionably needed. It therefore remains to consider the relation of the feebleminded, who continue as members of the community, to society as a whole.

A new alarm concerning mental deficiency and its social implications gained considerable currency following the publication of the official report on the distribution of the intelligence ratings among the men recruited into the United States Army during the World War.<sup>1</sup> That the publication of the findings of these psychological examinations should have caused many misgivings about the future of democracy and of the race is perhaps understandable, for to the unwary reader there was contained in the official report the suggestion (although unwarranted) that nearly half of the white draft, and thus by inference, of the white population of the country, must be classified as feebleminded. In that previous alarmist stage described in Chapter V, the public became concerned about the menace of the comparatively small number of feebleminded then known to exist, presumably not more than one per cent of the population at most and considerably less than this by the more conservative estimates. To have it suddenly appear that possibly half of us were feebleminded—that seemed, indeed, occasion for real alarm.

Writing on the published findings of the tests under the caption

1. Yerkes, R. M. *Psychological Examining in the U. S. Army* Memoirs, National Academy of Sciences, 1921, Vol. XV, p. 785 and ff

of "American Misgivings," Cornelia J. Cannon finds many serious considerations involved for the future of education, industry, democracy, etc., and states: "It is clear that a very much larger proportion of low-grade intelligence must exist in our population than has been heretofore suspected."<sup>1</sup> Other writers who have been less careful in their interpretation of the army findings and not so cautious in their conclusions as Miss Cannon, succeeded in presenting a pretty sorry picture of the intelligence of the American people and in creating many forebodings for their destiny. From among a large number of editorials, magazine articles, and statements concerning the "revealed stupidity" of our population, Dr. Yerkes selects for quotation the following which appeared in a popular magazine:<sup>2</sup>

"The army mental tests have shown that there are, roughly, forty-five million people in this country who have no sense. Their mental powers will never be greater than those of twelve-year-old children. The vast majority of these will never attain even this meagre intelligence. Besides the forty-five millions who have no sense but a majority of votes, there are twenty-five millions who have a little sense. Their capacity for mental and spiritual growth is only that of thirteen- or fourteen-year-old children, and your education can add nothing to their intelligence. Next there are twenty-five millions with fair to middling sense. They haven't much but what there is, is good. Then lastly there are a few over four millions who have a great deal of sense. They have the thing we call 'brains'."

Such deductions as the foregoing from the results of the army tests have been well answered by Dr. Yerkes,<sup>3</sup> Prof. Woodworth,<sup>4</sup> Prof. English,<sup>5</sup> and others. It needs scarcely be said that those few sentences, which together with other portions of the official report, led to such dire conclusions concerning American intelligence, were not intended as a flat statement that half the country is probably feeble-minded. There was an "if" inserted in the official report which has been too frequently overlooked. To quote: "A moron has been defined as anyone with a mental age from 7 to 12 years. *If*

1 Cannon, Cornelia J. *Atlantic Monthly*, Feb., 1922, p. 145

2 Yerkes, R. M. *Testing the Human Mind* *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1923, p. 358.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 358 and ff.

4 Woodworth, R. S. *Aristocracy and Democracy Seen Through Intelligence Tests*. *New York Times*, Sunday, Jan. 28, 1923.

5 English, H. B. *Is America Feeble-minded?* *The Survey*, Oct. 15, 1922, p. 79.

this definition is interpreted as meaning anyone with a mental age less than 13 years, as has recently been done, then almost half of the white draft (47.3 per cent) *would have been* morons. Thus it appears that feeble-mindedness, *as it present defined*, is of much greater frequency of occurrence than had been originally supposed." The italics are inserted.

What is the meaning of this much misinterpreted statement of the official report? It must be understood, first of all, that feeble-mindedness (or mental deficiency) is a wholly relative and arbitrary term used to indicate that portion of the population who, because of possessing intelligence less in degree than that of other members of the population, are regarded as incapable of "competing on equal terms with their normal fellows or of managing themselves and their affairs with ordinary prudence." If therefore, according to present fixed definitions of mental deficiency, nearly half of a large and supposedly representative group of men such as were gathered in the army during the recent war, would have to be classified as feeble-minded, one of three things must have been true: either, (1) the group to which the tests were applied was not a truly representative group (the report points out that many men of high intelligence who were selected as officers and for essential industries were not included in the examinations); or (2) the tests themselves in their application or interpretation were inaccurate; or (3) if neither of the above elements seriously affected the findings, then it is plain that we have arbitrarily set the upper limit of mental deficiency too high. In the official report the selective process noted is recognized but it is stated as the opinion of the examiners that this fact could not possibly have reduced the general intelligence level of the draft as much as three years, mental age. As to the second consideration, while realizing that the intelligence tests, and particularly the group tests are not infallible, there is no reason to believe that serious errors crept into the result. We must therefore frankly face the fact that, even with the allowances for selection, the intelligence of the average man is less than perhaps we liked to think is was, always bearing in mind, however, the point that has been too frequently overlooked, that the general intelligence which the tests measure probably does not develop much in anyone beyond sixteen years, and that therefore a mental age of thirteen, fourteen, or fifteen on a scale where the upper limit is sixteen is not a really great deficiency.

Because the intelligence of the average man should now seem to fall fairly close to where we thought the upper limit of mental deficiency to be, is certainly no occasion for hasty alarm but rather an occasion for revising our conception as to what mental-age levels constitute mental deficiency. To continue to use a definition of mental deficiency which would include a half or even a fourth of the population is about as ridiculous as to frame a definition that would include all the population. There is contained here the suggestion that perhaps we have been too ready in the past to classify as mental defectives and commit to institutions, individuals of merely low average intelligence who happened to be brought to public attention through some minor form of delinquency. Greater progress will be made if such individuals are regarded as simply in need of treatment for conduct disorder or psychopathic personality.

What the army tests and other psychological examinations of large groups of people in truth show, is that human intelligence like other natural and social phenomena is subject to gradation or distribution, and that this distribution inclines to follow in general the lines of the normal frequency curve. In the measurement of the intelligence of 905 unselected school children, Terman found that the distribution of the intelligence quotients of the group followed closely the normal frequency distribution and was "remarkably symmetrical."<sup>1</sup> What Terman has to say about this distribution is to the point:

"Since the frequency of the various grades of intelligence decreases gradually and at no point abruptly on each side of the median, it is evident that there is no definite dividing line between normality and feeble-mindedness, or between normality and genius. Psychologically the mentally defective child does not belong to a distinct type, nor does the genius. There is no line of demarcation between either of these extremes and the so-called 'normal' child. The number of mentally defective individuals in a population will depend upon the standard arbitrarily set up as to what constitutes mental deficiency."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Leta S. Hollingworth confirms this opinion and states that in psychological research generally, if a large number of individuals selected at random are measured in any given mental trait, the distribution follows that of the normal frequency curve.<sup>2</sup> The histo-

1. Terman, L. M. *The Measurement of Intelligence*. 1916. p. 67.

2. Hollingworth, L. S. *The Psychology of Subnormal Children*. 1920 p. 2.

gram showing the per cent distributions of the mental ages of the white draft in the army, although somewhat irregular, is not greatly at variance with the normal frequency curve.<sup>1</sup>

There would seem to be nothing, therefore, at which to take alarm in the knowledge we have thus far gained concerning the distribution of human intelligence. It is about as we should have expected from our knowledge of the distribution of other natural phenomena. In fact the occasion for serious alarm would arise if we found the distribution of intelligence to be otherwise. It is these very differences in human beings, symmetrically distributed as they are, which are basic to social organization and make possible a harmonious social order. It would be a very poor sort of society in a functioning sense which was made up of persons entirely similar in intelligence, in ability, in aptitude. There would be little to make such a society cohere, for the individuals in it would not be mutually interdependent. Co-operation through division of labor is one of the first things essential to the establishment of any stabilized social order. Co-operation inheres in the differences which exist among individuals. Were all men created with the intelligence and aptitude of leaders and with the will to lead, the result would not be social organization but social disruption. As Prof. Cooley states:

"The unity of the social mind consists not in agreement but in organization, in the fact of reciprocal influence or causation among its parts, by virtue of which everything that takes place in it is connected with everything else, and so is an outcome of the whole. Whether like the orchestra it gives forth harmony may be a matter of dispute, but that its sound, pleasing or otherwise, is the expression of a vital co-operation, cannot well be denied. \* \* \* \* This differentiated unity of mental or social life, present in the simplest intercourse but capable of infinite growth and adaptation is what I mean in this work by social organization."<sup>2</sup>

Instead of deploring the fact that a representative portion of the human race is distributed among the lower intelligence levels, it should be recognized that those of lesser intelligence are essential to the social order. In fact, if we accept the present definitions of feeble-mindedness, it may be said in all truth that very many of the so-called feeble-minded have a definite, even important, place in society. There are many tasks in the world of the dull, monotonous

1 *Psychological Examining in the U S Army*. Fig. 51, p 787.

2 Cooley, C. H. *Social Organization* 1915. p. 4



and routine type that can be vastly better performed as a day-in and day-out proposition by the so-called subnormal, than by persons of so-called normal or superior intelligence. Psychological examinations of factory employees have shown, to the employer's surprise, that some of the best operatives register as feeble-minded. They are the steady, plodding, faithful workers who can best stand the hum-drum toil of machine work. A large firm in New York City, after experimenting with its messenger service, came to the conclusion that the feeble-minded youth made the most satisfactory messenger because he was likely to be the most faithful in his attendance to his duties and was contented to hold his position longer than the normal boy. In the consideration of the occupations held by former inmates of the Waverley and Rome institutions, and by former students of the public school special classes, the same facts have been brought out. In other words, many of the feeble-minded when properly trained and supervised, have proved their economic and social usefulness.

In the daily papers of recent date, there appeared almost simultaneously two news items each of which was featured as of major importance. The first of these under the heading, "Prosperity Shown in Labor Shortage," quotes an official review of the United States Employment Service of the Department of Labor to the effect: "A growing labor shortage continues to be an obstacle to capacity operations in the iron and steel industry, foundries, metal and machine plants, most especially in the northwestern districts. A common labor shortage obtains in almost all districts." The other news item under the heading, "Ask Modification of Immigration Law," refers to a statement of the National Association of Manufacturers in which it is declared that "the prosperity of the nation is menaced by the present emergency of depleted labor caused by the restrictions of the Three Per Cent Immigration Law."

Why should we permit the lack of labor to be "an obstacle to capacity operations" and turn our eyes toward Europe to supply this labor demand until at least every effort has been made to utilize the latent capacity of the thousands of feeble-minded in this country of whom, until lately, we would perforce have made dependents, if indeed our policy of neglect and social ostracism of this class had not forced them into crime and delinquency? The immediate problem of supplying the labor demands of industry would seem to

be that of salvaging the human materials already at hand and, until recently, languishing on the scrap heap.

Arthur Pound in his book, "The Iron Man in Industry," by which he means the automatic machine, bears testimony to the peculiar fitness of the so-called feeble-minded to adapt themselves to modern industry: "Neither does the Iron Man get on the nerves of those below the average mentality. He is a consistent friend of the defective. Just as deafness is an advantage in certain industrial occupations,—our shops employ many mutes with satisfaction both ways,—so mental lacks may become assets for certain industrial purposes. Given enough sense to master simple routine occupations, and enough appreciation of duty, or fear of relatives, to come to the shop regularly, the below-average person can soon be adjusted industrially. And, when adjusted, the moron will be found immune to many of the pricks which irritate the normal man into seeing red, less fretted by monotony, less worn by rhythmic chatter. There is less in his soul striving to release itself; he has brought into the shop comparatively little that the shop cannot use; and so he accepts dumbly his appointed place in the scheme of things industrial, remains unbitten by ambition, and reacts not at all against subordination. The less mind one has, the less it resents that invasion of personality which is inseparable from large-scale and mechanized enterprises. I have heard industrial engineers and welfare workers say that industrial efficiency, as working out in our day, puts a premium on mental deficiency."<sup>1</sup>

The feeble-minded, who have come to public attention and have actually been known and classified as such, doubtless constitute but a small fraction of the large number of persons with equally low intelligence who perform their tasks steadily day in and day out, lead uneventful lives, and live decently and happily in their own limited ways. All of which raises a question as to whether we should apply the term *feeble-minded* to this army of wage-earners just because their intelligence level happens to fall in the present classification of moron. While it is a mere matter of terminology, those who contribute in such large measure to the essential work of the world as does this group should have nothing suggesting a stigma attached to them.

As has previously been indicated, the solution of the "problem of

<sup>1</sup> Pound, Arthur *The Iron Man In Industry* 1922 p. 53

feeble-mindedness" depends upon the degree and kind of social control, or to be more exact, of social self-control, which is exercised. As we have seen, the very nature of the distribution of human intelligence means that inevitably there will always be, as there always have been, leaders and followers in the social procession. In other words, because some men react to the situation about them more quickly, more completely, and more effectively than others, they become leaders and those who react more slowly naturally become followers. The kind of leadership conducive to social progress is the leadership of such a *protocracy*, to use Professor Giddings' expression, of those who, combining the best intellectual endowment with the broad-visioned type of social personality, react in the most socially effective ways.

The feeble-minded, or those of the lower grades of intelligence with whom we have been dealing, will reflect more closely than any other elements of the population the kind of social leadership which directs them. They are almost entirely dependent upon leadership and *some* kind of leadership they *will* find. Many will doubtless find the wrong kind and become a social and political detriment, unless they are afforded a strong leadership of the right kind. On the other hand, the feeble-minded may be expected to be among the most faithful followers of a protocracy if the protocracy sufficiently recognizes their special need for social guidance.

The reason for all that has been written here is, that the large group of persons whom we choose to call feeble-minded will probably always constitute no small part of the social order. It does not aid in the solution of the problems connected with their presence in society merely to call attention to the menace they present, to say that democracy is a "delusion" because all persons do not have the mental capacity to get through college or the grades. Progress will be made only by facing the facts and coming to know and understand the feeble-minded in such a way as to make them, to the largest degree possible, social assets instead of social liabilities.

Some pages back we spoke of differences among individuals in such matters as intelligence as being basic to social organization. Along with these necessary differentiations, however, there must also be a fundamental basis of unity, a large degree of likemindedness if a real society is to exist. Where will such a unity, where will a basis for likemindedness be found among individuals of such

widely diverging degrees of intelligence as we have seen to exist in our American population? That fundamental basis of likemindedness can be found apparently only in an element or elements which may be possessed in more or less equal measure by all regardless of intelligence rating. That common bond of unity is undoubtedly to be found in the realm of ideals, for the moving power of ideals is connected not so much with intelligence as with the instinctive and emotional make-up of the whole personality. The majority of the feeble-minded, as has been shown, are distinctly capable of absorbing ideals and, with a reasonable degree of guidance and encouragement, of living up to them. Those who are concerned about social progress will take special thought for the feeble-minded and in addition to affording them training which will make them useful workers, will see to it that they also come to hold as a very part of their nature those social ideals which are the means of binding people together in a common society.

The whole purpose of this thesis has been to indicate that the majority of the feeble-minded may be safely and profitably retained as functioning members of society, both from an economic and a social standpoint, *provided* the group exercises over them a sufficient degree of social self-control to give them, until they approach adult life, the training suited to their capacities, and continues to furnish throughout their lives the sort of leadership which will foster in them the highest social ideals.

In "Little Dorrit" Dickens gives a description of a mental defective which, though written 65 years ago, is in striking accord with the modern understanding of such persons. Dickens' description of Maggy not only contains very distinctly the idea of mental age, but also makes clear the ability of the mental defective with proper training and supervision to be a self-supporting, respected member of the community. Maggy's guardian, Little Dorrit, to whom Maggy "is very much attached" and whom she calls her "little mother" explains, when Arthur Clennam asks for Maggy's history, that "When Maggy was ten years old she had a bad fever, sir, and she has never grown any older ever since." Little Dorrit makes clear that Maggy "was never to be more than ten years old, however long she lived."

Although Maggy's mental age was thus fixed at quite a low level for life, she continued to develop in other ways under Little Dorrit's sympathetic guidance, to such an extent that she came to fill a useful

and acceptable place in the social order. To continue Little Dorrit's history of her: "At length in course of time, Maggy began to take pains to improve herself, and to be very attentive and very industrious; and by degrees was allowed to come in and out as often as she liked, and got enough to do to support herself, and does support herself." And as to Maggy now, "You can't think how good she is, sir," said Dorrit with infinite tenderness. "Or how clever," said Dorrit. "She goes on errands as well as any one. And is as trustworthy as the Bank of England. She earns her own living entirely. Entirely, sir!" said Dorrit in a lower and triumphant tone. "Really does!"

## VITA

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Stanley Powell Davies was born in Philadelphia, Pa., June 22, 1892. He attended public school in Philadelphia and later in Conshohocken, Pa., and was graduated from the Conshohocken High School in 1908. He entered Bucknell University, at Lewisburg, Pa., in 1908 and was graduated from that University with the degree of A. B. in 1912. Following one year of teaching and another of social work, he entered upon graduate studies at the University of Pennsylvania in the year 1914-15. In the fall of 1915 he entered Columbia University, where he pursued graduate studies until the spring of 1917. During the World War he served as First Lieutenant and later as Captain in the Sanitary Corps, U. S. Army. Following discharge from the army, he assisted in the Recreation Survey conducted by the Cleveland Foundation, and was co-author with Rowland Haynes of Volume VI of that survey entitled, "Public Provision for Recreation." In November, 1919, he joined the staff of the New York State Charities Aid Association where he is now serving as Executive Secretary of the Committee on Mental Hygiene.